Approved by the Text-Book Committee, Madras.

JACOB FAITHFUL

(Abridged and Adapted)

Imso 582

PIONEER PUBLISHERS
MADRAS

375

JACOB FAITHFUL

BY CAPTAIN MARRYAT

(Abridged and Adapted)

PIONEER PUBLISHERS
MADRAS

PREFACE

THAT large-souled critic of art and life, who staked a fortune for the betterment of human society, struck the key-note of true literary judgment when he pronounced that those books alone were of real worth which admitted of a second and a third reading, without waning in interest. Who can tire, for instance, of reading times without number Shakespeare, Goldsmith and Scott, whose works, far from flagging in interest, afford further and fresher beauties and delights at every repeated reading. Next only to these masterminds of creation, who touched nothing but adorned, are writers like Defoe, Dickens and Thackeray, whose works are of such abiding interest. These works have stood the test of time, and rightly taken their place among the classics by their claims to delight generations after generations of men.

Jacob Faithful and almost all other works of Captain Marryat *do* bear many more than a single reading. And they derive their interest from qualities peculiar to Marryat himself. His heroes perform no great feats of arms; they display no extraordinary intellectual greatness; they are small men, eking out humble lives; they are often unworldly, and full of petty foibles. But they possess other qualities that endear them to us. They tell their own tales, taking us into confidence and laying bare their tiny souls in all their little strifes and struggles, as well as joys and successes. They are real, and to be commonly found in the world, having a simple philosophy of their own and a wholesome outlook upon life.

Marryat's books are pre-eminently boys' tales, in which he has displayed great literary and imaginative gifts. His characters are alive and often familiar to us. We like to meet them, shake them by the hand, and praise them for their goodness of conduct and behaviour, or scold them for their faults and failings.

But in Marriyat's days, juvenile books had not come to be recognised as representing a distinct class of writing, requiring special treatment. Consequently, though much of the story deals with Jacob's boyhood, and his fast-growing thoughts, feelings and experiences, and though, indeed, young Tom, with his frolics and escapades, and puns upon words and sallies of wit and humour, is bound to be a thorough-going favourite with the young, there are some parts of the book that must be regarded as beyond appeal to their undeveloped minds. These, however, have been scrupulously deleted without breaking the trend or detracting the general interest of the story.

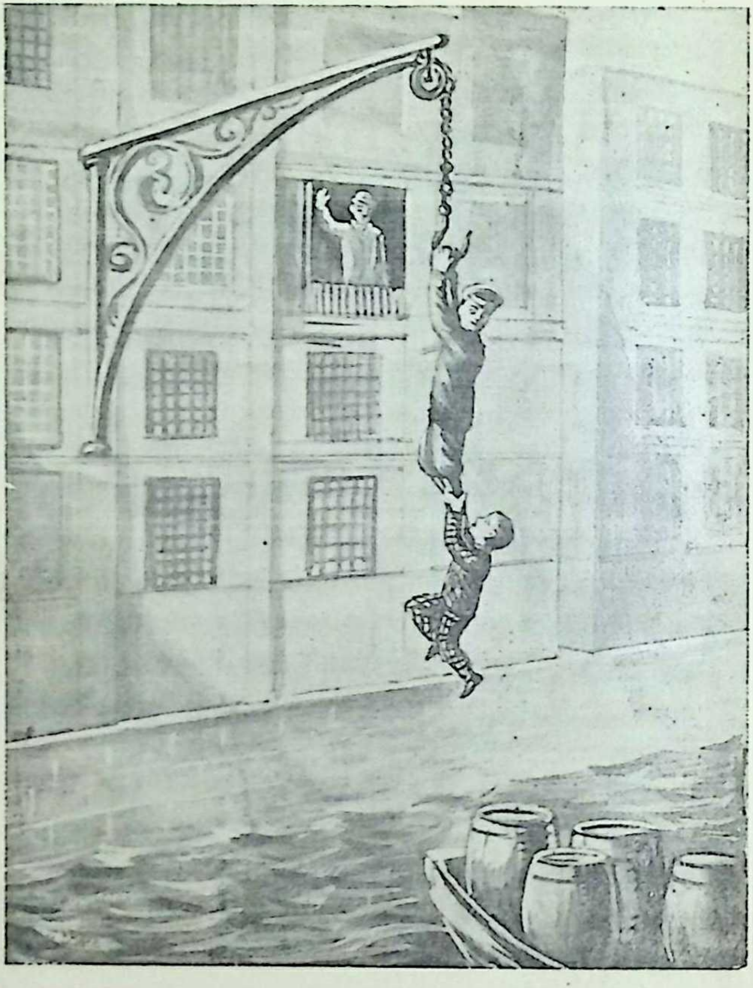
The diction and style of *Jacob Faithful* are perhaps of even greater value to juvenile readers than the story itself. Captain Marryat's style is distinguished for vigour and taste, no less than for its fitness for telling a boys' tale. The book is rich in that modest beauty which comes to language from the apt use of its native idiom, and that directness of expression and graceful simplicity which yield a far greater charm than all ornaments of style and rhetorical force.

But a few idioms are to be met with here and there in the book, which have undergone slight changes in usage since his time. These have been generally allowed to remain, so far as they have not passed altogether into the domain of archaism.

Though the book deals with the lives and doings of watermen, and sailors too, it is not encumbered with many terms that may strictly be called nautical. These, too, have been judiciously replaced, so as to facilitate reading for the young.

Captain Marryat's books have always been great favourites with the young, who have derived both pleasure and profit from the reading. May more and ever more derive the same pleasure and profit !

JACOB FAITHFUL



" Going up along with you, father "

(*Page 37*)

JACOB FAITHFUL

CHAPTER I

GENTLE reader, I was born upon the water,—not upon the salt and angry ocean, but upon the rapid-flowing river. It was in a floating sort of box, called a lighter, and upon the River Thames, at low water, that I first smelt the mud. The lighter was manned by my father, my mother, and your humble servant. My father had the sole charge—he was monarch of the deck; my mother, of course, was queen, and I was the heir-apparent.

Before I say one word about myself, allow me dutifully to describe my parents. First, then, I will portray my queen-mother. Report says that when first she came on board of the lighter, a lighter figure and a lighter step never pressed a plank; but as far as I can tax my recollection, she was always a fat, unwieldy person. Locomotion was not to her taste—gin was. She seldom quitted the cabin—never quitted the lighter; a pair of shoes might have lasted her for five years.

At first, indeed, she drank only to keep the cold out of her stomach, which the humid atmosphere from the surrounding water appeared to warrant. My father took to his pipe for the same reason; but, at the time that I was born, he smoked and she drank, from morning to night, because habit had rendered it almost necessary to their existence. The pipe was always to his lips, the glass incessantly to hers.

My father was a practical philosopher. He had a few sayings which brought every disaster to a happy conclusion; and these were deeply impressed on my infant memory. One was, *It's no use crying; what's done can't be helped.* When once these words escaped his lips, the subject was never again mentioned. To my mother he used but one expression, *Take it coolly;* but it always had the contrary effect on my mother, as it put her more in a passion. It was like pouring oil on flame. Another favourite expression of my father's, when anything went wrong, was *Better luck next time.*

My father's education had been neglected. He could neither read nor write. "I wish I could," he would say, "but look, boy, I mean this mark for three-quarters of a bushel. Mind you remember it when I ask you." I was well acquainted with his scratches and dots.

I cannot recall much of my infancy; but I remember that the lighter was often very brilliant with blue and red paint, and that my mother used to point it out to me as "so pretty," to keep me quiet. I shall therefore pass it over, and commence at the age of five years, at which early period I was of some little use to my father.

Up to the time that I quitted the lighter in my eleventh year, the banks of the river were the boundaries of my thoughts and experiences. Before I was ten, I knew the name of every reach of the river, and every point—the depth of water, and the shallows, the drift of the current, and the ebb and flow of the tide itself. I was able to manage the lighter as it floated down with the tide; for what I lacked in strength, I made up with skill.

It was at the age of eleven years that a serious calamity took place, which changed my prospects in life. One fine summer evening we were floating up with the tide, some distance above Putney Bridge; a strong breeze sprang up, and checked our progress; we could not, as we expected, gain the wharf that night; so we dropped our anchor. My father said to me, "Remember, Jacob, we must be at the wharf early to-morrow morning; so keep alive." Then he went into the cabin; and, after finishing my supper alone on deck, I lay down watching the stars in wonder. I was curious to know what they were made of, and how they came to be there, and why they twinkled so, when, suddenly, my thoughts were interrupted by a loud shriek. At the same time, I felt a strong smell of something burning, and the shriek was repeated again and again. I had hardly time to get upon my legs when my father burst up from the cabin, rushed over the side of the lighter, and disappeared under the water. I caught a glimpse of his face as he passed me, and observed a maddening fear spread over it. I ran to the side where he had disappeared, but could see nothing but a few eddying circles as the tide rushed quickly past. For a few seconds, I remained confused in mind at his disappearance and evident death; but I was soon brought back to my senses by the smoke which enveloped me, and the shrieks of my mother, which now grew fainter and fainter; and I hastened to her assistance.

A strong, thick smoke escaped from the cabin, and mounted straight up in the air in a dense column. I attempted to go in, but found it impossible. I did what most children would have done in such distress—I sat down and cried bitterly. In about ten minutes, I recovered somewhat and looked at the cabin. The smoke had disappeared and all was silent. I went down to it and called, "Mother!" but there was no answer. The lamp was still burning, and I could see plainly every corner of the cabin. Nothing was burning now. Breathless with fear, I called out again, "Mother!" and, getting no answer, I ventured to go to the bed. My mother was not there! but there appeared to be a black mass where she should be lying. I put my hand fearfully upon it—it was a sort of pitchy cinder. I screamed with horror, my little senses reeled; and I staggered from the cabin and fell senseless on the deck.

It was broad daylight when I awoke. For some time I could not recall to my mind all that had happened. At length, the cabin hatch, still open, caught my eye. At once, all the horrors of the preceding evening came back to my mind, and I realised that I was left alone in the lighter. I turned my eyes from the cabin hatch to the water, thought of my father, and for more than half an hour watched the tide as it ran up.

As the sun rose, the mist gradually cleared away; trees, houses and green fields, other barges coming up with the tide, boats passing and re-passing, the barking of dogs, the smoke issuing from the various chimneys, all broke upon me by degrees; and I was recalled to the sense that I was in a busy world, with my own duty to perform. The last words of my father were, "Mind, Jacob, we must be up at the wharf early to-morrow morning." I therefore cut off the cable, and once more the lighter was at the mercy of the stream, guided by a boy of eleven years.

In about two hours, I was within a hundred yards of the wharf. I hailed for assistance, and two men on board of another lighter at the wharf pushed off in a boat to know what I wanted. I told them that I was alone in the lighter, without anchor or cable, and requested them to secure her. They came on board, and, in a few minutes, the lighter was safe alongside of the others. In half an hour, I was conducted to the house of the proprietor. He was at breakfast in the parlour, with his wife and daughter, a little girl—nine years old. By this time I had recovered myself, and on being questioned, I told my story clearly and briefly.

"Have you any friends, my poor boy!" inquired the lady.

"No."

"What! No relations on shore?"

"I never was on shore before in my life."

"Do you know that you are a helpless orphan?"

"What's that?"

"That you have no father or mother."

"Well," replied I, in my father's words, having no answer more suitable, "it's no use crying; what's done can't be helped."

"But what do you intend to do now?" inquired the proprietor.

"Don't know, I'm sure. Take it coolly," replied I sadly.

"What a very odd child!" observed the lady. "Is he aware of the extent of his misfortune?"

"Better luck next time, missus," I replied.

"What strange answers from a child who has seen so little of life," observed the proprietor to his wife. "What is your name?"

"Jacob Faithful."

"Can you read or write?"

"No," replied I, again using my father's words, "No, I can't; I wish I could."

"Very well, my poor boy, we will see what is to be done," said the proprietor.

"I know what's to be done," I said; "You must send a couple of hands to get the anchor and the cable, before they cut the buoy adrift."

"You are right, my lad; that must be done immediately," said the proprietor; "but now you had better go down with Sarah into the kitchen: cook will take care of you."

I went down the stairs with Sarah, who, telling the cook to take care of me, left me there. The cook was a kind-hearted, fat woman, and she fed me with such food as I had never tasted before. I ate with good appetite. Soon I felt inclined to sleep; and in a few minutes, I was snoring upon two chairs.

Thus passed many days, and with the kitchen and its surroundings I was now quite at home. But at every other part of the house and furniture, I was completely puzzled. Everything seemed to me foreign, strange and unnatural.

One of these days, I was fitted out in new clothes, and called into the parlour. The proprietor, Mr. Drummond, and his wife, looked over me in my new clothes, and were amused at my awkwardness. Their little daughter, Sarah, who often spoke to me, went up and whispered to her mother. "You must ask papa," was the reply. Another whisper, and a kiss, and Mr. Drummond told me that I should dine with them. In a few minutes, I followed them into the dining room.

There I sat, perched on a chair, with my feet swinging close to the carpet, glowing with heat from the compression of my clothes, and the novelty of my situation, and all that was around me. Mr. Drummond helped me to some scalding soup; a silver spoon was put into my hand, which I twisted round and round, looking at my face reflected on its polish.

"Now, Jacob, you must eat the soup with the spoon," said little Sarah, laughing; "We shall all be done. Be quick."

"Take it coolly," replied I, digging my spoon into the burning food, and tossing it into my mouth. It burst forth from my tortured throat in a shower, accompanied with a howl of pain.

"The poor boy has scalded his mouth," cried the lady, pouring out a tumbler of water.

"It's no use crying," replied I, blubbering with all my might; "what's done can't be helped."

"Better that you had not been helped," observed Mr. Drummond, wiping off the particles of soup sprinkled on his coat and waistcoat.

"The poor boy has been shamefully neglected," said the good-natured Mrs. Drummond. "Come, Jacob, sit down and try it again; it will not burn you now."

"Better luck next time," said I, shoving in a portion of it, with a great deal of hesitation and awkwardness.

Mrs. Drummond kindly showed me how to use the spoon, when Mr. Drummond said, "Let the boy eat it after his own fashion, my dear—only be quick, Jacob; for we are waiting."

"Then I see no good losing so much of it, taking it in tale," observed I, "when I can ship it all in bulk in a minute." I laid down my spoon, and stooping my head, applied my mouth to the edge of the plate, and sucked the remainder down my throat without spilling a drop. I looked up for praise, and was very much astonished to hear Mrs. Drummond say, "That is not the way to eat soup."

I made so many blunders during the meal, that little Sarah was in a continued roar of laughter; and I felt so miserable that I wished myself again heartily in my dog-kennel on board of the lighter, gnawing biscuit in all the happiness of contentment, and dignity of simplicity. My heart was overflowing with shame, and at one unusually loud laugh of little Sarah, I burst into a passion of tears. As I lay with my head on the table-cloth, each sob coming from the very core of my heart, I felt a soft, warm breathing upon my cheek.

I looked up timidly, and saw the glowing face of little Sarah. Her eyes were filled with tears, and she looked at me softly and regretfully.

"I won't laugh at you any more," said she; "so don't cry, Jacob."

"No more I will," replied I, cheering up. She remained standing by me, and I felt grateful. "The first time I get a piece of wood," whispered I, "I'll cut you out a barge."

"Oh, papa; Jacob says he'll cut me out a barge."

"That boy has a heart," said Mr. Drummond to his wife.

"But will it swim, Jacob?" inquired the little girl.

"Yes, and if it's *lopsided*, call me a lubber."

"What's lopsided, and what's a lubber?" inquired Sarah.

"Why, don't you know?" cried I; and I felt my confidence return; for, in this little instance, I knew more than she did.

CHAPTER II

Having some interest with the governors of a charity school near Brentford, Mr. Drummond lost no time in procuring me admission; and before I had quite spoiled my new clothes, having worn them nearly three weeks, I was suited afresh in a formal attire, marked with No. 63. I was the last-entered boy, and the number, therefore, indicated the total strength of the school.

I was conducted to the school by Mr. Drummond, where he left me with a little good advice. I was put into the ranks by the chief schoolmaster, Domine Dobiensis, as he delighted to be called, or Dreary Dobs as his dutiful scholars delighted to call him. He was a man who breathed certainly in the present age, but one-half of his life was spent in Greek and Latin or Algebra. When once carried away by a problem, or a Greek thought, he passed, as it were, from his present existence, and everything was unheeded. His body remained, and breathed on his desk, but his soul was absent. This was well-known to all the boys, who used to say, "Domine is in his dreams, and talks in his sleep."

Domine Dobiensis left reading and writing to the usher, contrary to the regulations of the school, putting the boys, if possible, into Mathematics, Latin and Greek. The usher was not over-competent to teach the two first; the boys were not over-willing to learn the last. The master was too learned, the usher too ignorant; hence the scholars profited little. The Domine was grave and touchy, but he possessed the kindest heart.

"Jacob Faithful, draw near," were the first words he spoke to me the next morning, when I had taken my seat at the farther end of the schoolroom. I rose and walked up through two lines of boys, who put out their legs to trip me up in the passage.

"Jacob knowest thou thine alphabet?"

"I don't know what that is."

"Mr. Knapps shall forthwith instruct thee. Go to him."

And I retraced my steps.

The usher, Mr. Knapps, was a thin, young man, apparently nineteen or twenty years of age, and very small in stature.

"What is that, boy?" said Mr. Knapps pointing to the letter A.

I looked attentively, and recognising, as I thought, one of my father's marks, replied, "that's half a bushel."

"Half a bushel! you are more than half a fool. That is the letter A."

"No; it's half a bushel; father told me so."

"Then your father was as big a fool as yourself."

"Father knew what half a bushel was, and so do I. That's half a bushel."

"I tell you it is the letter A," cried Mr. Knapps in a rage.

"It's half a bushel," replied I persistently. Mr. Knapps dared not punish me while the Domine was present; so he led me to him.

"I can do nothing with this boy, sir," said he, red as fire; "he denies the first letter in the alphabet; he insists that the letter A is not A, but half a bushel."

"Dost thou, in thine ignorance, pretend to teach when thou comest here to learn, Jacob Faithful?" said the Domine.

"Father always told me that that thing there meant half a bushel," said I.

"Thy father might, perhaps, have used that letter to signify the measure which thou speakest of; but thou must forget that which thy father taught thee. Dost thou understand?"

"No, I don't."

"Then, little Jacob, that represents the letter A, and whatever else Mr. Knapps may tell thee, thou wilt believe. Return, Jacob, and be docile."

I did not quit Mr. Knapps until I had run through the alphabet, and then returned to my place, that I might con it over at my leisure. I felt heated and annoyed by the constraint of my shoes; so I drew my feet out of them one by one, and thought no more of them for some time. In the meanwhile, the boys next to me had passed them on with their feet to the others, and thus they were shuffled along until they went right up to the master's desk. I missed them and perceived that there was mirth at my expense. I watched up and down narrowly and quietly, and saw the boy sitting nearest to the Domine catch up one of my shoes; and the Domine being then in an absent fit, the boy dropped the shoe into the master's coat-pocket. A short time afterwards, he got up, went to Mr. Knapps, put a question to him, and while it was being answered, dropped the other into the packet of the usher, and quietly returned to his seat. I said nothing, but when the school-hours were over, and all the boys had left, I remained fixed to my form. The Domine rose from his seat and came down the dais; the usher got up; and both approached me on their way out.

"Jacob Faithful, why still porest thou over thy book—didst thou not understand that the hours of recreation had arrived? Why risest thou not on thy feet like the others?"

"'Cause I have no shoes."

"And where are thy shoes, Jacob?"

"One's in your pocket," replied I, "and the other's in his."

Each party placed his hand behind, and felt the truth of my words.

"Expound, Jacob," said the Domine, "who hath done this?"

"The big boy with the red hair, and a face picked all over with holes," replied I.

"Mr. Knapps, it would be improper on my part, and also on yours, to suffer this disrespect to pass unnoticed. Ring in the boys."

The boys were rung in, and I was desired to point out the offender. I immediately did so, but the boy stoutly denied the offence. He had, however, abstracted my shoe-strings, and put them into his own shoes. I recognised them, and it was sufficient proof to convict the boy of his offence.

"Barnaby Bracegirdle," said the Domine, "thou art convicted, not only of disrespect towards me and Mr. Knapps, but further, of the grievous sin of lying. Simon Swapps, let him be hoisted."

The boy was hoisted and the birch descended with all the vigour of the Domine's muscular arm. Then Barnaby was let down, the boys dispersed and the Domine departed.

"Now, then," said Barnaby, holding one fist to my face, while with the other hand he rubbed behind, "come out in the playground, and see if I don't drub you within an inch of your life."

"It's no use crying," said I soothingly; for I had not wished him to be flogged. "What's done can't be helped. Did it hurt you much?"

This well-meant consolation was taken for sarcasm. Barnaby was in a fury.

"Take it coolly," observed I.

Barnaby grew wilder still.

"Better luck next time," continued I, trying to soothe him.

Barnaby could not control his anger; he shook his fist at me and ran into the playground, daring me to follow him. His threats had no weight with me; but not wishing to remain indoors, I followed him in a minute or two, when I found him surrounded by the other boys.

"Cinderella, where are your glass slippers?" cried the boys, as I made my appearance.

"Come out, you water-rat," cried Barnaby, "you son of a cinder."

"Come out and fight him, or else you are a coward," exclaimed all the boys, from No. 1 to No. 62.

"He has had beating enough already to my mind," replied I.; "but he had better not touch me—I can use my arms."

A ring was formed, in the centre of which I found Barnaby and myself. He took off his clothes, and I did the same. He was much older and stronger than I, and knew something about fighting. One boy came forward as my second. Barnaby advanced and held out his hand, which I took heartily, thinking it was all over and he had made his peace with me; but immediately I received a right and left on my face, which sent me reeling backwards. This was a complete mystery to me, but it raised my bile, and I returned the blows with interest. I was very strong in my arms, as may be supposed; and I threw them about like the sails of a windmill, never hitting straight, but with semi-circular blows, which fell on or about his ears. On the contrary, his blows were all received straight on my face, and my nose and face were soon covered with blood. As I hit at random, Barnaby rushed in, and bore me down easily.

"Take it coolly, and make sure when you hit," said my second. I took his advice, and profited by it.

A second and a third round succeeded, all apparently in Barnaby's favour, but really in mine. Again we stood up, panting and exhausted. Barnaby rushed at me, and I avoided him: before he could return to the attack, I had again planted two severe blows upon his ears, and he reeled. He shook his head, and with his fists in the attitude of defence, asked me whether I had had enough.

"*He has,*" said my second, "stick to him now, Jacob, and you'll beat him."

I did stick to him; three or more blows applied to the same part finished him, and he fell senseless on the ground.

"What's all this," cried Mr. Knapps, pressing his way through the crowd, and followed by the matron.

The matron, who had taken a liking for me, because I was good-looking, ran up to me.

"Well," says she, "if the Domine does'nt punish that big brute for this, I'll see whether I'm anybody or not," and taking me by the hand, she led me away.

In the meantime, Mr. Knapps desired the other boys to take Barnaby in, and lay him on his bed. He breathed hard, but still remained senseless. A surgeon was sent for, who found it necessary to bleed the boy. It was the custom of the Domine, whenever two boys fought, to flog both of them; but in this instance, it was not followed, because I was not the aggressor, and Barnaby narrowly escaped with his life.

Neither was I less successful in my studies. I learnt rapidly after I had conquered the first rudiments. I was considered by the Domine as the cleverest boy in the school. I certainly learnt almost by instinct. I read my lesson once over, and threw my book aside, for I knew it all. In a thousand instances, the affection of a father appeared towards me under the rough crust of the Domine.

I need hardly say that I loved him; and I learned with avidity to please him. I felt that I was of consequence—my confidence in myself was unbounded.

CHAPTER III

THE Domine's kindness and attention were unremitting, and my progress became most rapid. One evening I was seized with a giddiness in the head. I complained to the matron; she felt my hands, pronounced me feverish, and ordered me to bed. I passed a restless night; the next morning I attempted to rise; but a heavy burning ball seemed to roll in my head, and I fell back on my pillow. The matron came, was alarmed at my state, and sent for the surgeon. He pronounced that I had caught the Typhus fever, which was then raging in the vicinity. This was the first time in my life when I had known a day's illness—it was a lesson I had yet to learn. The surgeon bled me, and giving directions to the matron, promised to call again. In a few hours, I was quite delirious—my senses ran wild.

For many days I lay unconscious of either pain or existence; when I awoke from my stupor, I opened my eyes and dimly perceived something before me that cut across my vision in a diagonal line. As the mist cleared away, and I recovered myself, I made out that it was the nose of Domine Dobiensis, who was kneeling at the bedside. His spectacles were dimmed with tears, and his long gray locks falling on each side and shading his eyes. His prayer-book was in his hand, and he still remained on his knees. He had been praying for me.

I feebly stretched forth my arms and called "Domine." The old man clasped his hands, looked upwards, and said, "O God, I thank Thee—he will live. Hush, hush, my sweet one, thou must not prate;" and he returned on tiptoe. I heard him mutter triumphantly, as he walked away, "He called me 'Domine!'."

From that hour I rapidly recovered, and in three weeks was again at my studies. I was now within six months of being fourteen years old. Mr. Drummond, who had occasionally called to ascertain my progress, came to talk over with the Domine upon my future prospects. "All that I can do for him, Mr.

Dobbs," said my former master, "is to bind him apprentice to serve his time on the Thames, and that cannot be done until he is fourteen. Will the rules of the school permit his remaining till then?"

"The regulations do not exactly, but I will," replied the Domine. "I have asked nothing for my long services, and the governors will not refuse me such a small favour; should they refuse, I will charge myself with him, that he may not lose his precious time."

Mr. Drummond, having received my consent to be bound apprentice, wished me farewell, and departed. During the six months, the Domine pressed me hard, almost too hard; but I worked for love, and to please him I was most diligent. At last, the time had flown away, and Mr. Drummond came with a servant carrying a bundle under his arm. I dressed myself in a neat blue jacket and trousers, and with much good advice from the Domine, and kind wishes from the matron, I bade farewell to them and, in an hour, was once more under the roof of the kind Mrs. Drummond.

But how different were my sensations now to those which oppressed me when I entered it before! I was no longer a little savage, uneducated and confused in my ideas. On the contrary, I was full of imagination, confident in myself and in my own powers, cultivated in mind, and proud of my success. The finer feelings of my nature had been called into play. In person I had greatly improved, as well as much increased in stature.

I walked confident and elastic, joying in the world, full of hopes, and kindly disposed towards my fellow creatures.

Mrs. Drummond held out her hand to me, which I took respectfully.

"I should not have known you, Jacob; you have grown quite a man," she said, smiling. Sarah held back, looking at me with pleased astonishment; but I went up to her, and she timidly accepted my hand. It was some time before she would converse, and much longer before she would become intimate.

Mr. Drummond sent for me into his office a few days after my arrival at his house and said, "Jacob, this is Beazely, who has charge of the *Polly* barge. "Beazely" continued my protector, addressing the man, "I have told you that this lad is bound 'prentice to the *Polly*;

I expect you will look after him, and treat him kindly. No blows or ill-treatment. If he does not conduct himself well (I'm sure he will), let me know."

Mr. Beazely had served the best part of his life on board a man-of-war; and in the battle of Trafalgar, he lost both his legs. Since then he had worked on the river. He walked on short stumps, on which he kept his balance easily. He bore an excellent character, and was very active. His temper was always cheerful, and he was a little inclined to drink. But the principal feature in him was lightness of heart; he was always singing. His voice was very fine and powerful.

He was accompanied by his son Tom, a lad of my own age, as merry as his father; and he too had a good voice, and a great deal of humour. We three composed the crew of the lighter. The name of the father was Tom Beazely; but he was always known on the river as "old Tom."

As soon as we had brought our things on board, old Tom received his orders, and we cast off from the wharf. The wind was favourable. Young Tom was active as a monkey and as full of tricks. His father took the helm, while we two, assisted by a small Newfoundland dog, which Tom had taught to take a rope in his teeth, made sail upon the lighter; and away we went, while old Tom's song might be heard from either shore.

"Tom, you beggar, is the bundle ready for your mother? We must drop the skiff, Jacob, at Batter-sea Reach, and send the clothes on shore for the old woman to wash, or there will be no clean shirts for Sunday. Shove in your shirts also, Jacob; the old woman won't mind that."

"Old Tom, is that you?" called out a man from another barge.

"Yes, what's left of me, my hearty."

"You'll not fetch the bridges this tide—there's a strong breeze right up the reaches below."

"Never mind, we'll do all we can." Here, Jacob, take the helm, while I and Tom put the craft a little into order."

Old Tom then stumped forward, followed by his son and the dog. After coiling down the ropes, and sweeping the decks, they went into the cabin to make their little arrangements.

We had nearly reached Batter-sea fields, when they returned on deck.

"Look ye, Jacob, do you see that little house with the two chimneys? That's mine, and there's my old woman. Tom, my boy, haul up the skiff, and paddle on shore with the bundle; ask the old woman how she is, and tell her I'm hearty."

Tom was in the boat in a moment, and pulling lustily for the shore.

"Tom's a good boy, Jacob," said old Tom, when the boy had left the lighter, "but not steady, as they say you are. His mother spoils him, and I can't bear to be cross to him either; for his heart is in the right place after all."

Tom returned soon. When half way between the lighter and the shore, he lay on his oars. His mother was standing on the shore.

"Tom, Tom!" cried his mother, shaking her fist at him, as he stooped down his head; "if you do, Tom!"

"Tom, Tom," cried his father from the lighter, shaking his fist also, "if you dare, Tom!"

But Tom was not within reach of either party; and he dragged a bottle out of the basket which his mother had sent with him, and putting it to his mouth, took a long sip.

"That's enough, Tom!" screamed his mother, from the shore.

"That's too much, you rascal!" cried his father, from the barge.

But Tom minded neither; he took what he considered his allowance, and then very coolly pulled alongside, and handed up the basket and bundle of clean clothes on deck. Then he jumped on deck, and ran forward before his father could stump up to him. The main hatch was open, and Tom put that obstacle between his father and himself, and then said smiling,

"What's the matter, father?"

"Matter, you scamp! How dare you touch the bottle?"

"The bottle—the bottle's there, as good as ever."

"The grog is what I mean—how dare you drink it?"

"I was half way between my mother and you; so I drank success and long life to you both. Isn't that being a very dutiful son?"

"I wish I had my legs back again, you rascal!"

"You wish you had the grog back again, you mean, father."

"In the matter of drinking the grog, you scamp, you seem determined to stand in my shoes."

"Well, shoes are of no use to you now, father—why shouldn't I? Why don't you trust me? If you hadn't locked the cupboard, I wouldn't have helped myself." And Tom stooped down to tighten his bootlace.

Old Tom, who was still in wrath, thought this a good opportunity to trip over the bricks, with which the lighter had been laden, and get hold of his son. But fortunately for the boy, one of the bricks turned over, and let his father's wooden legs down between two piles of bricks. Old Tom attempted to get out of it, but couldn't. "Tom, Tom!" cried he, "come here and pull me out."

"Not I," replied Tom coolly.

"Jacob, Jacob, come here; Tom, run and take the helm.

"Not I," replied Tom.

"Tom, you scoundrel, am I to stick here all day?"

"No, father, I don't suppose you will. I shall help you directly."

"Well, then, why don't you do it?"

"Because I must come to terms. You don't think I'd help myself to a thrashing, do you?"

"I won't thrash you, Tom."

"Now, father, we are both even."

"How's that?"

"Why, you clapped a stopper over all on me this morning, and would not allow me a drop; now you've got a stopper on you."

"Well, then, take off mine, and I will take off yours."

"If I unlock your leg, you will unlock the cupboard?"

"Yes."

"And you promise me a stiff drink after dinner?"

"Yes, yes, as stiff as I stand here."

Tom, who was aware that his father would keep his promise, immediately went to his assistance, and helped him out.

It was now time to anchor, as we were meeting the flood. Tom served up the dinner, which was ready. As we had not to weigh again for some hours, our dinner was prolonged.

The moon was up before the tide served and we weighed our anchor. Old Tom steered, his son prepared supper, and I remained forward, keeping a sharp look-out that we did not run foul of anything. We swept the next reach with the tide, which was now slackening fast. Our anchor was dropped, and we all went to supper.

CHAPTER IV

OUR voyage was made, we took in a return cargo, and arrived duly at the proprietor's wharf, when I found that I could not proceed with them the next voyage. For Mr. Drummond informed me that he had been obliged to send away his junior clerk; and he wished me to take the clerk's place, until another could be procured. The lighter therefore took in her cargo, and sailed without me; but that was of no consequence, as my apprenticeship still went on. I now lived with Mr. Drummond as one of his family, and wanted for nothing. His continual kindness made me strive all I could to please him by diligence and attention, and I soon became very expert at accounts, and, as he said, very useful. The advantages to me were considerable, and I gained information every day. Still, although I was glad to be of any use to Mr. Drummond, the confinement to the desk was irksome, and I anxiously looked for the arrival of the new clerk to take my place, and leave me free to join the lighter. Mr. Drummond did not appear to me to be in any hurry; indeed I believe that he would have retained me altogether, had he not perceived that I still wished to be on the river.

"At all events, Jacob, I shall keep you here until you are master of your work; it will be useful to you hereafter," he said to me one day; "and you do not gain much by sailing up and down the river."

It was true; and I also derived much advantage from the evenings spent with Mrs. Drummond. She was a very sensibe, good woman, who made me read aloud to her and little Sarah as they sat sewing.

I had no idea, until I was employed posting up the books, that Mr. Drummond's concern was so extensive, or that there was so much capital employed in the business.

As I was on shore several months, I became acquainted with several families, one or two of which are worth noticing. Among the foremost was Captain Turnbull's. While young, he had, with his twin brother, been apprenticed to the sea; and they grew up into thoroughbred seamen employed in the Greenland fishery. They rose to be mates, then captains. They were very successful, owning part, then the whole, of a ship, lastly two or three ships.

Finally, they wound up with handsome fortunes. Captain Turnbull was a married man without a family. His wife was a would-be fashionable lady, against which fashion Captain Turnbull had for years pleaded poverty. But his brother, who had remained a bachelor, died leaving him forty-thousand pounds—a fact which could not be concealed. And now Mrs. Turnbull insisted on fashion, and Mr. Turnbull had no excuse to plead. The house they had lived in was given up, and a marine villa on the borders of the Thames, to a certain degree, met with the views of both of them. They had long been acquaintances of Mr. and Mrs. Drummond.

Mr. Turnbull was a constant visitor at our house, and very partial to me. He used to scold Mr. Drummond for keeping me so close to my desk, and would often persuade him to give me a couple of hours' run. When this was obtained, he would call a waterman, throw him a crown, and tell him to get out his wherry. We then embarked and amused ourselves pulling up and down the river.

I remained with Mr. Drnmmond about eight months, when, at last, the new clerk made his appearance, a little fat fellow, about twenty, with a face as round as a full moon, thin lips and red cheeks. I now expected my release, but I was disappointed. Mr. Drummond discovered him to be so awkward, and the head clerk declared that the time was so busy, that he could not spare me. This was true. Mr. Drummond had just come to a final arrangement, which had been some time pending, by which he purchased a wharf with large warehouses, and a house adjoining in Lower Thames Street—a very large concern for which he had paid a considerable sum of money. What with the valuations, winding-up of the Brentford concern on the old account, etc., there was much to do, and I toiled at the desk until the removal took place; and when the family were removed, I was still detained, as there was no warehouse-man for the unloading and hoisting up of goods. Mr. Tomkins, the head clerk, who had been a faithful servant many years to Mr. Drummond, was admitted as a partner, and had charge of the Brentford wharf, a promotion which he and his wife celebrated with a party.

A week after this party, we removed to Thames Street, and I performed the duty of warehouse-man. One morning old Tom came under the crane to discharge his lighter. He wished to see me, and instead of hooking on a cask to the crane, held on by his hands, crying, "Hoist away," intending to be hoisted himself up to the floor of the warehouse where I was standing. Now, there was nothing unusual in this whim of old Tom's; but still he ran a very narrow chance in consequence of an extra whim of young Tom's, who, as soon as his father was suspended in the air, caught hold of his two wooden stumps, to be hoisted up also; and as he caught hold of them, standing on tiptoe, they both swung clear of the lighter. The crane was on the third storey of the warehouse, and very high up.

"Tom, Tom, you rascal, what the devil are you about?" cried the old man, when he felt the weight of his son's body hanging to him.

"Going up along with you, father—hope we shall go to Heaven the same way."

"More likely to go to the devil together, you little fool: I never can bear your weight. Hoist away, there, quick." Hearing the voices, I looked out of the door, and perceiving their situation, ordered the men to hoist as fast as they could, lest old Tom's strength gave way. Old Tom's strength was going fast. "Oh Tom, Tom, what must be done now? I can't—I can't hold on but a little longer, and we shall be both dashed to pieces. My poor boy!"

"Well, then, I'll let go, father; it was all my folly, and I'll be the sufferer."

"Let go!" cried old Tom; "no, no, Tom, don't let go, my boy; I'll try a little longer. Don't let go, my dear boy; don't let go."

"Well father, how much longer can you hold on?"

"A little" replied the old man struggling.

"Well, hold fast now," cried young Tom; then, raising his head above his arms with a great exertion, he shifted one of his hands to his father's thigh, then the other; again raising himself as before, he caught at his father's trousers with his teeth, and shifted his hands round his father's body; from thence he gained the collar of his jacket, and from the collar climbed on his father's shoulders, and seized hold of the fall of the crane above, thus relieving his father of the weight.

"Now, father, are you all right?" cried Tom, panting as he clung to the fall above.

"I can't hold on even ten seconds more, Tom, — my clutch is going now."

"Hang on by your eyelids, father, if you love me," cried young Tom in agony.

It was indeed an awful moment; they were now at least sixty feet above the lighter, suspended in the air. The men whirled round the wheel, and I had at last the pleasure of hauling them both in on the floor of the warehouse. The old man was so exhausted that he could not speak for the space of a minute or more. Young Tom, as soon as all was safe, laughed immoderately. Old Tom sat upright. "It might have been no laughing matter, Tom," said he, looking at his son.

"What's done can't be helped, father," says Tom. After all, you're more frightened than hurt."

"I don't know that, you young scamp," replied the old man. Now let this be a warning to you, Tom. Jacob, my boy, couldn't you say that I've met with an *accident*, and get a drop of something from Mr. Drummond?"

I thought I might honestly say so, and soon returned with a glass of brandy, which old Tom drank off with relish.

We then proceeded to unload the lighter. The new clerk was sent into the lighter to take the marks and numbers as they were hoisted up, and soon became a butt to young Tom, who gave him the wrong marks and numbers of all the casks, to his interrogations.

Fortunately, we had checked the numbers of the casks as they were received above. Mr. Drummond sent for young Tom, and asked him how he dared to play such a trick. Tom replied very boldly, that it was meant as a good lesson to the clerk, so that in future he might do his own work, and not trust to others. At this Mr. Drummond smiled, and Master Tom was dismissed without punishment.

As the men had all gone to dinner, I went down into the lighter to have a little chat with my old shipmates.

"Jacob," said old Tom, "Tom gets worse and worse; he is too full of scrapes."

"Well, father, if I prove my folly by getting into scrapes, I prove my wit by getting out of them."

"Yes, that may be true, Tom; but suppose we both had come down from the crane, what would you have thought then?"

"I suspect, father, that I should have been past all thinking."

CHAPTER V

OUR conversation was interrupted by Mr. Hodgson, the new head-clerk, who had come into the establishment in the place of Mr. Tomkins. This man took an evident dislike to me, which seemed to increase every day, as Mr. Drummond gave me fresh marks of his approbation. "You, Faithful, come out of that barge directly," said he, "and go to your desk. I will have no eye-servers under me. Come out, sir, directly."

"I say, Mr. Quill-driver," cried old Tom, "do you say that Jacob is an eye-server?"

"Yes, I do; you old blackguard."

"Well, then, for the first part of your story, my service to you, you *lie*; and as for the second, it remains to be proved who is."

Mr. Hodgson's temper was not softened by the reply of old Tom. My blood, too, was up, for I had borne much already; and young Tom was bursting so with impatience to take my part. He walked carelessly by the head clerk, saying to me as he passed by, "Why, I thought, Jacob, you were 'prentice to the river; but it seems that you're bound to the counting-house. How long do you mean to serve?"

"I don't know," replied I, as I left sulkily; "I wish I were out of it all."

I had not taken my seat at my desk more than a minute, when Mr. Hodgson returned and commenced a shower of abuse. My pride could scarcely allow me to submit to it. He snatched from before me an invoice, perfectly correct and well-written and nearly completed by me, tore it into fragments, and ordered me to write it over again. Growing indignant at this treatment, I refused, and throwing down my pen, looked him determinedly in the face. Irritated at this defiance, he caught up a directory, and threw it at my head. I was no longer able to command myself, and seizing a ruler, I returned the salute. As it was whizzing through the air, Mr. Drummond entered the room, and he was just in time to witness Mr. Hodgson struck on the head and felled to the ground, while I remained with my arm raised, my face glowing with passion.

Appearances were certainly against me. Assistance was sent for, and the head clerk removed to his chamber; and during all the time, I remained seated on my stool before the desk, with varied feelings that chased one another in my heart. How long I remained there I cannot say; it might have been two hours. Then I was sent for by Mr. Drummond. It appeared that Mr. Hodgson had in the meantime come to his senses, and given his own account of the quarrel; and this was corroborated by the stupid young clerk, who was no friend to me, and sought favour with the head clerk. I walked up to the drawing room, and there I found Mr. and Mrs. Drummond, and little Sarah whose eyes were red with crying. I entered without any feeling of fear; for my breast was too full of anger. Mrs. Drummond looked serious and thoughtful.

"Jacob Faithful," said Mr. Drummond, "I have sent for you to tell you that in consequence of your disgraceful conduct to my senior clerk, you can no longer remain under my roof. It appears that what I have witnessed to-day is but a sequel to conduct equally improper and impertinent; that so far from doing your duty, you have constantly neglected it; and that the association you have formed with that drunken old man and his insolent son has led you into this folly. You may say that it was not your wish to remain on shore, and that you preferred being on the river. At your age, it is but too often that young people consult their wishes rather then their interests; and it is well for them if they find those who are older, and who wish them well and decide for them. I had hoped to place you in a more respectable situation in society than was my original intention when you were thrown upon me as a helpless orphan; but now I see my error. You have proved yourself not only deceitful, but ungrateful.

"I have not," interrupted I, calmly.

"You have. I myself have been a witness to your improper conduct, which, it appears, has long since been concealed from me; but no more of that. I bound you apprentice to the river, and you must now follow up your apprenticeship; but expect nothing from me. You must henceforth work your own way up in the world, and I trust that you would reform and do well. You many return to the lighter until I can procure you a situation in any other craft; for I consider it my duty to remove you from the influence of those who have led you astray. With the old man and his son you shall not remain. I have one thing more to say. You have been in my counting-house for some time, and you are now about to be thrown on the world. Here are ten pounds for your services. I trust, sincerely trust, Jacob, that the severe lesson you are about to receive will bring you to a sense of what is right, and that you will soon give up the evil ways you have formed from your late companions. Do not attempt to justify yourself; it is useless." Mr. Drummond then rose and left the room.

"I should have replied, had it not been for this last sentence of Mr. Drummond's. I stood still, and firmly met his glance, as he passed me. It was mistaken for hardness of heart.

"Have you nothing to say, Jacob," Mrs. Drummond observed at last, "that I could tell Mr. Drummond when his anger is not so great?"

"Nothing, Madam, except that I will try to forgive him."

This reply was offensive even to the mild Mrs. Drummond. She rose from her chair, "Come, Sarah," said she; and she walked out of the room, wishing me, in a kind, soft voice, a "good-bye, Jacob," as she passed me.

My eyes swam with tears. I tried to return the salutation; but I was too much choked by my feelings to be able to speak; and my silence was again mistaken for pride and ingratitude. Little Sarah still remained—she had not obeyed her mother's call.

My heart sank when Mr. Drummond left the room; a bitter pang passed through it as Mrs. Drummond went out of my sight. I stood with the handle of the door in my hand, gasping for breath. I was blinded with the tears that flowed rapidly down my cheeks. I remained a minute in this state, when I felt Sarah touch my other hand.

"Jacob!" she said softly; but, before she could speak a word more, she burst into tears, and sobbed on my shoulder. My grief found way, and I mingled my sobs with those of the affectionate girl. When we were more calm, I told her all that had passed; and one, at least, in the world believed that I had been treated unjustly. Soon the servant came to tell her that her mother desired her presence. Sarah bade me farewell, and hastened to obey; but seeing the money on the table, she pointed to it and said, "Your money, Jacob."

"No, Sarah, I will not accept it. I would accept anything from those who treat me kindly, and feel more and more grateful to them; but that money I will not accept—I cannot. Say that I could not take it."

Seeing that I was firm, Sarah again bade me farewell, and hastened away.

The reader may easily imagine that I did not put off my departure. I hastened to pack my clothes, and in less than ten minutes after Sarah had quitted me, I was on board the lighter, with old Tom and his son. I told them what had happened.

"Well," replied old Tom, "I don't know that I have done you any harm. Jocob, and I'm sorry that Mr. Drummond should suppose so. I'm fond of a drop, that's true; but I appeal to you whether I ever forced it upon you. But, then, you see that although I preach, I do not practise; that's the worst of it. I know I have to answer for allowing Tom to be so fond of grog; and I often think to myself that if Tom should chance to find service in the Navy, and be punished for being in liquor, he'll think of his father and curse him in his heart."

"I'll curse the cat, father or the officer who complains of me, or the captain who flogs me, or my own folly; but I'll be hanged if ever I curse you, who have been so kind to me," replied Tom, taking his father's hand.

CHAPTER VI

"HALLO! in the lighter there—I say, you *lighter boy!*" such were the words I heard, as I was facing the deck in deep thought. I looked up and saw the grinning, stupid, sneering face of the young clerk, Gubbins. "Why don't you answer when you are called to, heh? You are wanted up here! Come up directly."

"Who wants me?" I asked, reddening with anger.

"What's that to you? Do you mean to obey my order or not?"

"No, I do not," I said, "I'm not under the orders of such a fool, thank God; and if you come within my reach, I'll try if I can break your head, thick as it is, as well as your master's."

The fellow disappeared, and I continued to pace up and down.

As I afterwards discovered, the message was from Mrs. Drummond, who requested to speak to me. Sarah had communicated the real facts of my case, and Mrs. Drummond had been convinced that I was blameless. She had talked with her husband, and pointed out to him that my conduct under Mr. Tomkins had been exemplary; so there must have been some reason for so sudden a change. Sarah had gone into the counting-house, and obtained the invoice which the senior clerk had torn to pieces. Its correctness proved that one part of my assertions was true, and that nothing but ill-will must have caused its having been destroyed. Mr. Drummond felt more than he chose to admit; he was now aware that he has been too hasty; even my refusal of the money now appeared in a different light. Few people, however, like to admit they have been in error. Mr. Drummond, therefore, left his wife to examine further into the matter, and gave her permission to send for me. The way in which the message was given to me by the young clerk, and the result of it have already been stated. The answer returned by him to Mrs. Drummond was that I would not come, and that I had threatened to break the clerk's head as well as that of Mr. Drummond, though I meant only the senior clerk, and he knew it. Sarah was astonished, Mrs. Drummond was shocked, and Mr. Drummond was almost pleased to find that he could not have been wrong in having condemned me. Thus was the breach made wider than before, and all communication broken off.

In half an hour, we had hauled out of the tier, and dropped down to an American ship, to take out a cargo of flour; old Tom had been directed to land it at the Battersea wharf; thus I was for a time removed from the site of my misfortune. I cannot say that I felt happy; but I certainly felt glad to be away. I was reckless beyond limits.

Our cargo was on board of the lighter, and we were again tiding it through the bridges. We dropped our anchor above Putney Bridge a little after noon.

In a few minutes, we were seated at the cabin table, eating our supper.

"Come, Jacob, a drop will do you good," said old Tom, filling me one of the pannikins.

"Yes, I begin to like grog now," said I, drinking it off. The *now*, however, extended but to the space of the last twenty-four hours. My sunken spirits were raised by the stimulus, and, for the time, I got rid of the sorrowful current of thought that pressed upon my brain.

"Well, Jacob," said old Tom, "do you think of going on a man-of-war?"

"I'd like to serve my apprenticeship first, and then I don't care how soon I go."

"Well, my boy, you'll meet more fair play on board a king's ship than on shore.

"I should hope so," replied I bitterly.

"I wonder what your old gentleman, the Domine, thinks of it all. I suppose you'll go and see him some time."

"No," replied I, "I shall not go near him, nor near any one else. Mr. Drummond may think that I wish to make it up with him again. I have done with the shore. I only wish I knew what is to become of me, since I am not to serve in the lighter with you."

"Suppose Tom and I look out for another craft, Jacob? I care nothing for Mr. Drummond. He said the other day that I was a drunken old fellow. That's is a lie. You know that I keep sober when there's work to do. Only when I know everything is safe and there's no fear of anything, I get drunk with eyes open."

We sat at the table till a late hour. Old Tom amused us with his long stories; and that night, for the first time, I went to bed intoxicated. Old Tom observed, "Poor Jacob, it will do him some good; his heart was heavy and now he'll forget it all, for a little time."

"Well but, father, I don't like to see Jacob drunk," said young Tom. "It's not worthy of him; as for you or me, it's nothing at all; but I feel that Jacob was never meant by Providence to be drunk. I never saw a lad so altered in a short time, and I fear bad will come of it, when he leaves us."

I awoke the next morning with a violent head-ache, as might be supposed; but I had also a fever, brought on by my previous mental condition. I rose, dressed and went on deck, where the snow was nearly a foot deep. I rubbed my burning forehead with the snow, and felt relief. But soon the fever pressed on me, and sitting down on the water cask, I pressed my hands to my throbbing temples.

"You are not well, Jacob?" inquired Tom, coming up to me.

"I am not indeed, Tom," replied I.

He led me into the cabin. It was with much difficulty that I could walk; my knees shook, and my eyesight was dim. I was in a state of stupor until the lighter arrived at the Brentford wharf, and for many days after.

When I recovered my senses, I found myself in bed, and Captain Turnbull sitting by my side. I had been removed to his house on the arrival of the lighter at the wharf. Old Tom had informed Captain Turnbull, the Domine and Mr. Tomkins of the circumstances of my condition, giving it as his opinion that ill-treatment had produced the fever. All of them took my part, and Captain Turnbull went to London to state my condition to Mr. Drummond, and point out the injustice done to me. Circumstances had since occurred which influenced Mr Drummond to lend a willing ear to my justification; but the message which I was believed to have sent to Mrs. Drummond was still an obstacle. This, however, was partly removed by the faltering testimony of the young clerk, when he was questioned by Captain Turnbull and Mr. Drummond, and wholly so by the evidence of young and old Tom. Mr. Drummond desired Captain Turnbull to inform me, as soon as I recovered, that all was forgiven and forgotten. It might have been on his part, but not on mine; and when Captain Turnbull told me of it, I shook my head. "No, sir, I cannot return to Mr. Drummond; that he was kind to me, and that I owe much to his kindness, I readily admit; and now that he has owned his error in supposing me capable of such ingratitude, I heartily forgive him; but I cannot and will not receive any more favours from him. I cannot put myself in a situation to be again mortified as I have been. I feel I should no longer have the same pleasure in doing my duty as I once had; and I could never live under the same roof with those who now serve him. Tell him all this, and pray tell little Sarah that I feel very grateful to her for all her kindness to me, and that I shall always think of her with regret, at being obliged to leave her."

And at the remembrance of little Sarah, I burst into tears. Captain Turnbull never again mentioned the subject to me.

"Well, Jacob," replied he, "we will not talk of that any more. I'll give your message just in your own words. Now, take your draught, and try to get a little sleep."

Nothing but weakness now remaining, I rapidly regained my strength. Soon after my health was fully recovered, Captain Turnbull came to me one day, and said, "Jacob, the lighter has returned: and I wish to know if you intend to go on board again, and afterwards go into the vessel which Mr. Drummoud proposes for you."

"I will go into no vessel through Mr. Drummond's means or interests," I said.

"What will you do, then?"

"I can always enter on board a man-of-war, if the worst comes to the worst; but if I could serve out my apprenticeship on the river, I should prefer it."

"I rather expected this answer, Jacob, from what you have said to me already; and I have been trying to find if I cannot help you to find something agreeable to you. You don't mind being obliged to me?"

"Oh, no; but promise you will never doubt me—never accuse me." My voice faltered, and I could say no more.

"No, my lad, that I will not; I know you, as I think, pretty well; and the heart that feels a false accusation as yours does is sure to gaurd itself from all unworthy thoughts and deeds. You know old deaf Stapleton, whose wherry we have aften pulled up and down the river. I have spoken to him to take you as his help, and he has consented. Will you like to go? He has served his time, and has a right to take an apprentice."

"Yes" replied I, "with pleasure; and with more pleasure from expecting to see you often."

"Oh, I promise you all my custom, Jacob," he said, laughing "We'll often turn old Stapleton out, and have a row together."

"Very well, sir," replied I, "and many thanks to you."

"Well, then, consider it settled. Stapleton has a very good room, and all that's requisite on shore, at Fulham. I have seen his place, and I think you will find it comfortable."

I did not at that time know how much Captain Turnbull had been my friend. Indeed, he had made Stapleton take better lodgings, making up for the difference by a liberal allowance, and had, besides, promised him occasional payments in reward, if I were content with my situation. In a few days I had removed all my clothes to Stapleton's, had taken my leave of Mr. Turnbull, and was established as an apprentice to a water-man on the Thames. The lighter was still at the wharf when I left, and my parting with old and young Tom was equally and sincerely felt on both sides.

Thus did I remove from the lighter, and at once take up the profession of a water-man. I walked down to the Fulham side, and found Stapleton at the door of the public-house, standing with two or three others, and smoking his pipe.

"Well, lad, so you're chained to my wherry for two or three years, and I'm to initiate you into all the rules and regulations of the company. Now I'll tell you one thing; when the river is covered with ice as it is just now, haul your wherry up high and dry, and smoke your pipe till the river is clear."

"I might have guessed that," replied I, bawling in his ear, "without your telling me."

"Very true, my lad; but don't bawl in my ear quite so loud; I hear none the better for it; my ears require coaxing, that's all."

"Why, I thought you were as deaf as a post."

"Yes, so am I with strangers, because I don't know the pitch of their voice; but with those about me, I hear better when they speak quietly—that's human nature. Come, let us go home; my pipe is finished."

Stapleton had lost his wife; but he had a daughter, fifteen years old, who kept his lodgings, and looked after the house.

"Well, Mary, how do you get on?" said Stapleton, as we went up to the sitting room. "Here's young Faithful come to stay with us."

"Well, father, his room is ready."

"Very nice room, isn't it, boy?"

"Oh, yes, very nice for idle people; you may amuse yourself looking out on the river, or watching what floats by, or fishing with a pin in high water," said Mary, looking at me.

"I like the river," replied I gravely; "I was born on it, and hope to get my bread on it."

"Don't let your tongue run so fast, Mary; you are not over fond of work yourself."

"No; there is only one thing I dislike more," said she; "and that is holding my tongue."

"Well, I shall leave you and Jacob to fix up things; I am going back to the Feathers." And old Stapleton walked away, saying that he should be back to dinner.

Mary kept on wiping the furniture of the room for some minutes, while I watched quietly the floating ice on the river.

"Well," said Mary, "do you always talk as you do now? If so, you will be a very nice companion! Mr. Turnbull told me you were a sharp fellow, could read, write and do everything, and that I should like you very much. But if you mean to keep all that to yourself, you may as well not have had it."

"I am ready to talk when I have anything to talk about," I replied.

"That is not enough. I am ready to talk about nothing, and you must do the same."

"Very well, I will try."

"Mr. Turnbull told me that you knew Latin. Now, what is Latin?"

"Latin is a language which people spoke in former times."

"Well, then, you shall talk to me in Latin. That's agreed."

"And how do you mean to answer me?"

"Oh, if you talk properly, I shall soon understand you. I shall read the English of it in your eyes."

"Very well, I have no objection. When am I to begin?"

"Why, directly, to be sure. What a question?"

I went close up to her, and repeated a few words of Latin. "Now," said I, "look into my eyes, and see if you can translate them."

"Something impudent, I am sure," she replied, fixing her blue eyes on mine.

"Not at all; but it's enough Latin to begin with; suppose we make friends," said I, holding out my hand.

"That's what I really wished to do, although I have been talking so much nonsense," replied Mary. "I know we shall like one another, and be very good friends. You can't help feeling kind to a lonely girl. So, now, let us sit down and have a talk."

"Well, have you ever been at school?"

"Oh no—never. I often wish I had," replied Mary.

"Would you learn to read and write?"

"Will you teach me?" she asked, looking me earnestly in the face.

"Yes, with pleasure," replied I, laughing. "We will pass the evenings better so than by idle talk."

"Oh, I shall be so much obliged to you."

"Now, Mary, as we are to be such good friends, it is necessary that your father and I should be good friends too; so I must ask you to tell me what sort of a person he is; for I know little of him."

"Well, then, to prove to you that I am sincere, I will tell you something. My father, in the first place, is a very good-tempered sort of man. He works pretty well, but might gain more, if he does not so much like to smoke at the public-house. All he requires is his dinner ready, his linen clean, and the house tidy. He never drinks too much, and is always civil in speech. But he leaves me too much alone, and talks too much about human nature; that's all "

"But he is so deaf—how can he talk to you?"

"Now promise—for I'm going to do a very foolish thing, which is to trust a man—promise you'll never tell it again."

"Well, I promise," said I.

"Well, then—mind—you've promised. Father is no more deaf than you or I."

"Indeed," replied I; "why, he goes by the name of Deaf Stapleton?"

"I know he makes everybody believe that he is so; but it is to make more money."

"How can he make more money by that?"

"There are many people in business who go down the river, and they wish to talk of their business, as they go down the river, without being heard by others. So they always call for Deaf Stapleton; and, again, many a gentleman and lady going up and down the Thames, who have much to say to each other, without wishing people to learn."

"Oh, yes, I understand."

"They, too, call for Deaf Stapleton; and by this means he gets more good fares than any other water-man, and does less work."

"But how will he manage now that I am with him?"

"I suppose it will depend upon his customers. If a single person wants to go down, you will take the boat; if they call for oars, you will both go; if he considers Deaf Stapleton alone is wanted, you will remain on shore; or perhaps he will insist upon your being deaf, too."

"But I do not like deceit."

"No; it's not right; but father will never tell a word of what he hears so. Now you must do as you please; for I must go down into the kitchen, and get dinner ready."

"I have nothing to do," said I; "can I help you?"

"To be sure, you can, and talk to me, which is better still. Come down and wash the potatoes for me, and then I'll find you some more work. Well, I do think we shall be very good friends."

I followed Mary down into the kitchen, and we were soon very busy, and very noisy, laughing, talking, blowing the fire, and preparing for dinner. By the time her father came home, we were sworn friends.

CHAPTER VII

FOR many days the frost continued until at last the river was frozen over.

I set off at daylight one morning and was in good time for breakfast at Mr. Turnbull's. He was as kind as ever, and began telling me long stories about the ice in the northern regions.

"By the bye," he said "I hear there is an ox to be roasted whole, Jacob, on the Thames, a little above London Bridge; suppose we go and see the fun."

I consented, and we went to the river. The scene was very exciting. Booths were erected on the ice on many spots, with flags flying, and people walking or skating. Here and there smoke ascended from various fires, on which sausages and other eatables were being cooked. But here and there, too, were what were called rotten places, where the ice was not sound. But these were intimated by placards, warning people not to approach too near; and close to them were ropes and poles for help, if required. We amused ourselves for some time with the gaiety of the scene.

As we walked on, Mr. Turnbull's hat fell off; and the wind, catching it, blew it away skimming across the ice at a rapid rate. Mr. Turnbull and I gave chase, but could scarcely keep up with it, and, at all events, could not overtake it. Many people on the river laughed as we ran, and watched us in our chase. Mr. Turnbull ran before me, and being hot in pursuit, did not notice a large surface of rotten ice before him; neither did I, until all at once I heard it break, and saw Mr. Turnbull fall in and disappear. Many people were close to us, and a rope lay across the spot to point out the danger. I did not hesitate, but seized the rope, twisted it round my arm, and plunged in after Mr. Turnbull. I sank under the ice and pushed down the stream, and, in a few seconds, felt myself grappled by him, and, almost at the same time, the rope hauling me from above. They found there was resistance, and so hauled us up as fast as they could, but not until I had lost my senses. Still I clung to the rope with the force of a drowning man, and Mr. Turnbull clung to me similarly, and we shortly made our appearance at the mouth of the hole. A ladder was thrown across, and two men came to our assistance, pulled us out, and laid us upon it. Then they drew back and hauled us on it to a secure place. We were both still senseless; but we were at once taken to a public-house on the river-side, and put to bed. Medical aid was sent for, and we were soon restored.

The next morning we were able to return in a chaise to Brentford. Mr. Turnbull spoke but little the whole time; but he often pressed my hand, and when he dropped me at Fulham, he said, "God blees you, my fine boy; I will see you soon."

Although Mr. Turnbull appeared to have recovered from the effects of the accident, yet, the morning after his arrival, he was taken ill with shivering and pains in the loins, which ended in fever. He did not quit his bed for three or four weeks. I, on the contrary, felt no ill-effects. He sent for me to stay with him during his illness; and for many days, I was his constant nurse.

The general theme of his conversation was on my future prospects. He wished me to take up some profession or calling more likely to raise me in the world and, to that end, placed his funds freely at my disposal. But I was positive on one thing, that I would in future put myself under no obligation to any one.

On the day proposed for my departure, he came straight to the point, offering me everything. He said he was childless and, therefore, my acceptance of his offer would affect no one. He took me by the hand, and drawing me to him, passed his arm round me, and spoke in the kind accents of a father. He almost entreated me to consent, and the tears coursed each other rapidly down his cheeks. But my resolution was not shaken—although with a faltering voice I replied, "You have been very kind to me, sir—very kind—and I shall never forget it; and I hope I shall deserve it—But Mr. Drummond, Mrs. Drummond, and Sarah, were also kind to me—very kind—you know the rest. I will remain as I am, if you please; and if you wish me to love you, as I really do, let me be as I am—free and independent. I beg it of you as the greatest favour that you can possibly confer on me—the only favour which I can accept and be thankful for."

Captain Turnbull was some minutes before he could reply. He then said, "I see it is useless, and I will not tease you any more; but, Jacob, do not let the fire of injustice which you have suffered from your fellow-creatures prey so much upon your mind; let it not induce you to form the mistaken idea that the world is bad. As you live on, you will find much good in it; and remember, Jacob, that those who have injured you from the misrepresentation of others, have been willing, and have offered, to repair the fault. They can do no more, and I wish you would get over this revengeful feeling. We must forgive, as we hope to be forgiven."

"I feel what you say—and the truth of it, sir," replied I, "but I cannot combat the feeling. I will, therefore, admit every excuse you please for the faults of others; but, at the same time, I am not to be blamed if I refuse to put myself in a situation where I am liable to meet with mortification. Surely, I am not to be blamed, if I prefer to work for my bread after my own fashion."

I consider that this was the period from which I might date my first launching upon life. I was now nearly eighteen years old, strong, active and well-made, full of spirits, and overjoyed at the independence which I had so much sighed for. Since the period of my dismissal from Mr. Drummond's, my character had much altered. I had become grave and silent,—brooding over my wrongs, harbouring feelings of resentment against the parties, and viewing the world in general through the wrong medium of my prejudice. But I had become, in some degree, restored from this unhealthy state of mind by the pleasing sense of having rendered an important service to Captain Turnbull; for we love the world better when we feel that we have been of some use to it. I felt so happy that I could even think of the two clerks in Mr. Drummond's employ without feelings of revenge.

One Sunday evening, I set off on foot to Captain Turnbull's villa near Brentford. I rang at the porter's lodge, and asked whether the Captain was at home.

"Yes, sir," replied the old woman at the lodge: and I went in.

Captain Turnbull was in his own room. "My dear Jacob, this is very kind of you. But why have you kept away so long?" said Captain Turnbull.

"I have been very well employed, sir; Stapleton has given up the wherry, and I could not neglect his interests."

"Always right, boy; and how are you getting on?"

"I am very happy, sir, very happy, indeed."

"I am glad to hear it, Jacob; may you always be so! I should like you to come up with the wherry to-morrow, so that we may take a cruise."

"Very well, I shall be at your orders—at what time?"

"Say, ten o'clock, if the day is fine; if not, the next day."

"And now, sir, I will wish you good-bye, as I must go and see the Domine."

Mr. Trunbull shook my hand and we parted.

After spending some time with the Domine, who was very pleased to see me, I took leave of him, and came to Mr. Tomkins' house. He was at home, and received me very kindly. We talked over old affairs, and after a very pleseant evening, I took my leave with the intention of walking back home; but I found old Tom waiting outside on the look-out for me.

"Jacob, my boy, I want you to come down to my little place one of these days. What day will you be able to come? I shall be free for a fortnight, and you must spend the whole day with us. I want to talk a bit with you, and ask your opinion about a good many little things."

"Indeed!" replied I, smiling, "what, are you going to build a new house?"

"No—no; not that; but you see, Jacob, as I told you last winter, it is time for me to give up my work up and down the river. I am not so young as I was fifty years ago. I do mean to give up the craft in autumn; but at the same time, I must see how I can make matters out. So when will you come?"

"Well, then, shall we say Wednesday?"

"Wednesday is as good a day for me as any other; come to breakfast, and you shall go away after supper, if you like."

"Agreed, then; but where is Tom?"

"Tom, I don't know; but I think he has gone after that daughter of Stapleton's. It is all human nature, I suppose. They seem to be pretty well matched."

"Well, good night; I have a long walk."

When I returned home, I found Mary alone. "Has Tom been here?" I inquired.

"Yes, Tom has been here, and very amusing he has been."

"So he is always," said I.

Chapter VIII

The next morning I was up at Mr. Turnbull's at the time agreed upon. He was at the bottom of the lawn, which extended from his house to the banks of the river. The basket with our dinner was lying by him on the gravel walk.

"This is a lovely morning, Jacob; but it will be rather a warm day, I expect," said he, "come, let us be off at once." We pulled leisurely up the stream talking, and every now and then rested on our oars to take breath; for, the Captain said, "Why should we make a toil of pleasure? I like the upper part of the river best, Jacob, because the water is clear, and I love clear water."

Thus chatting and laughing, we pulled and paused for a considerable time, until at last we had gone beyond Kew Bridge. We thrust the bow of the wherry into a bow of sedges, and then sat down to our meal. We stopped there till it was late, and then shoved off and pulled down stream. The sun had set, and we were yet six or seven miles from Mr. Turnbull's house, when we saw a slender, handsome young man pulling towards us in a small boat.

"I say, my lads," said he, taking us both for watermen, "have you a mind to earn a couple of guineas with very little trouble"?

"Oh, yes," replied Mr. Turnbull, "if you can show us how—a fine chance for you, Jacob," he added, aside, to me.

"Well, then, I shall want your services, perhaps, for not more than an hour; it may be a little longer, as there is a lady in question, and we may have to wait. All I ask is, that you will pull well and do your best. Are you agreed?"

We consented; and he requested us to follow him, and then pulled for the shore.

"This is to be an adventure, I think," said I.

"So it seems," said Mr. Turnbull; "all the better."

The gentleman pulled into a little boat-house by the river-side, belonging to one of the villas on the bank, made fast his boat, and then stepped into ours.

"Now, we have plenty of time; just pull quietly for the present." We continued down the river; and after we had passed Kew Bridge, he directed us inshore, on the right side, till we came to the garden of a cottage. The water reached up to the brick wall, which rose above the river four or five feet.

"That will do. Stop, not a word," said he, rising and looking over. After a minute or two, he climbed from the boat on to the parapet of the wall, and whistled two bars of an air which I had till then never heard. All was silent, and he crouched behind a bush, and after a minute, repeated the same air in a whistle as before; still there was no appearance of movement at the cottage. He continued at intervals to whistle the portion of the air, and, at last, a light appeared at an upper window; it then disappeared and re-appeared, in all, three times. "Be ready, now, my lads," said he. In about two minutes afterwards, a female in a cloak appeared, coming down the lawn with a box in her hand, and panting with excitement.

The gentleman seized the box from her, and handed it to us in the boat.

"Take great care of that, my lads," said he, "and, now, Cecilia, we have no time to lose; the sooner you are in the boat the better."

The young lady gave a scream. We looked up, and beheld a third party on the wall. It was a tall, stout, elderly man, as far as we could observe in the dark. He immediately seized hold of the lady's arm, and was dragging her away. This was resisted by the young gentleman; and the other, leaving hold of the lady, began to defend himself, at the same time crying out "Help! thieves!"

"Shall I go to his assistance?" said I to Mr. Turnbull, "one must stay in the boat."

"Jump up, then, Jacob, for I never could get up that wall."

I was up in a moment, and was about to spring to the help of the young man, when four servants, with lights and with arms in their hands, made their appearance on the lawn. The lady had fainted on the grass; the elderly gentleman and the young one were down together, the former uppermost. Seeing the men coming to his assistance, he cried out, "Look to the watermen, secure them." I saw that not a moment was to be lost. I could be of no help to the young gentleman and the lady; and Mr. Turnbull might be placed in an awkward scrape. So I sprang into the boat, and shoved off. We were in the stream, and thirty yards' distance before they looked over the wall to see where we were.

"Stop! stop!" they cried to us.

"Fire, if they don't," cried their master.

We pulled as hard as we could. A shot was discharged; but it fell short of us. In a few minutes the scene of action was behind us. We then struck across to the other side of the river, and when we had gained close to the shore, we took breath.

"Well," said Mr. Turnbull, "this is a spree I little looked for."

"No," replied I laughing, "this is carrying the joke too far on the River Thames."

"Well, but what a pretty mess we are in; here have we property belonging to God knows whom. Now, what are we to do with it?"

"I think, sir, the best thing we can do is for you to take care of the box until we find out what all this is about. They will very likely follow up the pursuit and find their way to us in a day or two."

"The advice is good," said Mr. Turnbull, "and the sooner we get over this the better."

We soon reached Mr. Turnbull's house, and he landed in his garden, taking with him the tin-box. I left him there, and pulled down to Fulham as fast as I could.

That night I dreamt of nothing but the scene, over and over again, and the two bars of music were constantly ringing in my ears. As soon as I had breakfasted the next morning, I set off to Mr. Turnbull's.

"I wish I had nothing to do with this affair; but, as you say, what's done can't be helped. You will have to find out, Jacob, what the story is. Do you think you could remember the tune which the young gentleman whistled so often?" he said.

"It has been running in my head the whole night, and I have been trying it all the way as I pulled here. I think I have it exact. Hear, sir,"—I whistled the two bears.

"Quite correct, Jacob, quite correct; well, take care not to forget them. Where are you going to-day?"

"Nowhere in particular, sir."

"Suppose, then, you pull up the river, and find out the place where we landed. You may learn something there—but pray be cautious."

I promised to be very careful, and leaving him, I pulled np the river, and, in a short time, came abreast of the spot. I recognised the cottage, the parapet wall, even the spot where we lay. I observed that several bricks were detached, and had fallen into the river. There appeared to be no one stirring in the house, but I continued to pull up and down, looking at the windows. At last one opened, and a young lady looked out. I felt persuaded that she was the same that we had seen the night before. She sat at the window, leaning her head on her hand. I whistled the two bars of the air. At the first bar she started up; and she looked earnestly at me as I completed the second. I looked up; she waved her handkerchief once, and then shut the window. In a few seconds, she made her appearance on the lawn, walking down towards the river. I immediately pulled in under the wall, and stood up in my boat.

"Who are you? And who sent you?" said she, looking down on me.

"No one sent me, madam," replied I, "but I was in the boat last night. I am sorry you were so unfortunate; but your boy is quite safe."

"You were one of the men in the boat? I trust no one was hurt when they fired at you."

"No, madam."

"And where is the box?"

"In the house of the person who was with me."

"Can he be trusted? For they will offer large rewards for it."

"I should think so, madam," replied I, smiling "the person who was with me is a gentleman of large fortune, who was amusing himself on the river. He desires me to say that he will not give up the box until he knows to whom the contents legally belong."

"Good Heavens, how fortunate! Am I to believe you?"

"I should hope so, madam."

"And what are you then? You are not a waterman?"

"Yes, madam, I am."

She paused, looked earnesly at me for a

little while, and then continued, "How did you learn the air you whistled?"

"The young gentleman whistled it six or seven times last night before you came out. I tried it this morning coming up, as I thought it would be the means of attracting your attention. Can I be of any service to you, madam?"

"Service—yes, if I could be sure you could be trusted—of the greatest service. I am confined here—cannot send a letter—watched as I move,—only allowed the garden, and watched even while I walk here. They are most of them engaged in the search for the tin-box to-day, or I should not be able to talk to you so long." She looked round at the house anxiously, and the tears started in her eyes, as she said, "It would be very cruel—very wicked of you to deceive me, for I am very unfortunate and very unhappy. But you do not look as if you would. What is your name?"

"Jacob Faithful, madam, and I will be true to my name, if you will put your trust in me. I never deceived any one that I can recollect."

"Well, then, I will trust you, and think you to be sent from Heaven to be my aid; but how am I to see you? To-morrow my uncle will be back, and then I shall not be able to speak to you one moment."

"Well, madam, if you cannot speak, you can write. You see that the bricks on the parapet are loose here. Put your letter under this brick — I can take it away even in day-time without being noticed; and I can put the answer in the same place, so that you can secure it when you come out."

"Good Heavens, what an excellent idea!"

"Was the young gentleman hurt, madam, in the scuffle last night?" inquired I.

"No, I believe not much; but I wish to know where he is, so that I may write to him. Could you find him out? His name is William Wharncliffe."

"Yes, madam, with a little trouble."

The noise of a window opening was heard. "You must go — don't forget the bricks," and she disappeared.

CHAPTER IX

I pulled down to Mr. Turnbull's, and gave him an account of my doings. It being late, he ordered me some dinner in his study, and we sat there conversing over the affair. "Well," said he, as we finished, "you must allow me to consider this as my affair, Jacob, as I was the occasion of our getting mixed up in it. You must do all you can to find this young man, and I shall hire Stapleton's boat by the day until we succeed. I want to see you to-morrow morning before you go. Here is Stapleton's money for yesterday; and, now, good night, Jacob."

I was at Mr. Turnbull's early the next morning, and found him with his newspaper before him. "I expected this, Jacob," said he, "read that advertisement." I read as follows:—"Whereas, on Friday night last, between the hours of nine and ten, a tin box containing deeds and papers was handed into a wherry from the grounds of a villa between Brentfort and Kew, and the parties who owned it were prevented from accompanying it: this is to give notice that a reward of twenty pounds will be paid to the watermen upon their delivering the same to Messrs. James and John White, of No. 14, Lincoln's Inn Fields. As no other parties are authorised to receive the said tin box of papers, all other applications for it must be disregarded. An early attention to this advertisement will oblige."

"There must be papers of no little consequence in it, Jacob, depend upon it," said Mr. Turnbull; "however, here they are, and here they shall remain in the box, until I know more about it; that's certain. I shall see you to-morrow." Then, after conversing with him for a while, I left him.

It was Wednesday, and I had promised to go down to old Tom's to breakfast; so I hastened away, and an hour's smart pulling brought me to the landing place opposite to his house. I pulled in and made fast my boat. On entering, I found them all seated at the table. "Well, Jacob—come at last—thought you had forgot us," said old Tom. "Have you had your breakfast?"

"No," replied I "I was obliged to go to Mr. Turnbull's, and that detained me."

I finished my breakfast, which Mrs. Beazely placed before me; and as soon as all had been cleared away, old Tom commenced business.

"Jacob, sit down by me; old woman, bring yourself to an anchor on the high chair; Tom, sit anywhere, so you sit still. And now, listen;

you see, I can't tide it any longer. It is high time that I retired from the river. Now, there is Tom, in the first place. What's to be done with him? I think I'll build him a wherry, and he can finish his apprenticeship with my name on the boat; but to build him a boat will be a heavy pull for me."

"If you mean to build it yourself, I think it will prove a *heavy pull* for me," said Tom.

"But, Tom, I know you're light enough."

"Tom, leave my net alone," said his mother.

"Father made me light-fingered, mother."

"Ay, and light-hearted too, boy," added the dame, looking fondly at her son.

"Well," continued old Tom, "supposing Tom is provided for in that way, then I come to myself. I have an idea that I can do a good bit of work patching up boats; for you see I always was a bit of a carpenter. If the watermen know that I do it, they would all come to me fast enough."

"Jacob, will you lend me your wherry for half an hour?" said Tom. I assented, and Tom, first tossing the cat upon his mother's back, made his escape. Mrs. Beazely roared out and vowed vengeance, while old Tom and I burst into laughter. After Tom's departure, everything was finally arranged between old Tom and his wife, except the building of the wherry. Mrs. Beazely took me upstairs to show me the rooms, which were very neat and clean. I came down with her, and Tom said, "Did you see the room with the white curtains, Jacob?"

"Yes," replied I, "a very nice one it is."

"Well. Jacob, you're well off at present; but recollect this; that room is for you when you want it, and all else we can share with you."

"Yes, that it is, Jacob; I'll be your mother for want of a better."

I was much moved by the kindness of the old couple. Old Tom resumed the conversation and said, "But about this wherry—what do you say, old woman?"

"What will it cost?" she queried gravely.

"Come, let me see,—a matter of thirty pounds." The old woman shook her head, and then went in without replying.

"I think she could muster the blunt, Jacob; but she doesn't like to part with it. Tom must coax her."

As old Beazely finished, I perceived a wherry pulling in with some ladies. I looked attentively, and recognised my own boat, and Tom pulling. In a minute more, the boat reached the landing place; and who, to my astonishment, were seated there, but Mrs. Drummond and Sarah! As Tom got out of the boat and held it steady, he called to me; I could not do otherwise than go and assist them out. Mrs. Drummond retained my hand a short time after she landed, saying, "We are friends, Jacob, are we not?"

"Oh, yes, madam," said I, much moved, in a faltering voice.

"I shall not ask the question," said Sarah gaily, "for we parted friends."

As I recalled to my mind her affectionate behaviour, I pressed her hand, and the tears glistened in my eyes as I looked into her sweet face. As I afterwards discovered, this plan had been previously arranged with old and young Tom, to bring about a meeting without my knowledge.

Mrs. Bsazely showed the ladies into the house, and old Tom did the honours of the house after his own fashion by asking Mrs. Drummond if she would like to *whet her whistle* after her *pull*. Young Tom interpreted his father's request by saying, "Father wants to know, if you please, whether, after your *pull* in the boat, you wouldn't like to have a *pull* at the brandy bottle."

"No," said Mrs. Drummond, smiling, "but I should be obliged for a glass of water. Will you get one, Jacob?"

I hastened to comply, and when I had done so, Sarah looked at me, and went to the door, turning back as if inviting me to follow. I did so, and we soon found ourselves seated on the bench in the old boat.

"Jacob," she said, looking earnestly at me, "you surely will be friends with *my* father?"

I think I should have shaken my head, but she laid an emphasis on *my*, which the little gipsy knew would have its effect. All my resolutions, all my pride, all my sense of injury vanished before the mild, beautiful eyes of Sarah, and I replied hastily, "Yes, Sarah, I can refuse *you* nothing."

"When will you come to see us, Jacob? Come to-morrow—now do—promise me."

"I wish you would not ask that."

"How, then, can you say that you are friends with my father? Do promise."

"Sarah," replied I earnestly, "I will come; and to prove to you that we are friends, I will ask a favour of him."

"Oh, Jacob, this is kind indeed," cried Sarah, her eyes swimming with tears. "You have made me so—so very happy."

Mrs. Drummond joined us soon after, and proposed to return. "And Jacob will pull us back," said Sarah. "Come, sir, look after your *fare*, in both senses. Since you *will* be a waterman, you shall work."

I laughed and handed them to the boat. Tom took the other oar, and we were soon at the steps close to Mr. Drummond's house.

"Mamma, we ought to give these poor fellows some drink; they have worked very hard," said Sarah, mocking. "Come up, my good men."

I hesitated. "Nay, Jacob, if to-morrow, why not to-day? The sooner these things are over the better."

I felt the truth of this observation, and followed her. In a few minutes I was again in that parlour in which I had been dismissed. Mr. Drummond came in, and said, "Jacob, I am glad to see you again in my house; misled by appearances, I did you injustice."

How true is the observation of the wise, that a soft word turneth away wrath. I recollected how Mr. Drummond had protected the orphan—how he had provided me with instruction, how he had made his house a home for me—how he had tried to bring me forward under his own protection. I recollected what, alas, I should never have forgotten—that he had treated me for years with affection, all of which had been erased from my mind by one single act of injustice. I felt that I was a culprit, and burst into tears; and Sarah, as once before, cried in sympathy.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Drummond," said I, as soon as I could speak, "I was very wrong to have been so revengeful after so much kindness from you."

"We both have been wrong—but say no more on the subject, Jacob."

Mrs. Drummond made a few inquiries about where I at present resided. The conversation beame general, but still rather embarrassed, when Sarah whispered to me, "What is the favour you would ask of my father?" I had forgotten it at the moment, but I immediately told him that I would be obliged if he would let me have a part of the money belonging to me, which he held in his possession.

"That I will, with pleasure; how much do you require?"

"Thirty pounds, if there is so much."

Mr. Drummond went down, and in a few minutes returned with the sum, in notes and guineas. I thanked him, and, shortly afterwards, took my leave.

Tom had taken his glass of grog below, and was waiting for me at the steps. We shoved off, and returned to his father's house, where dinner was just ready. After dinner, old Tom recommenced the argument. "The only hitch," says he, "is about the wherry."

"If that is the only hitch," said I, "I can remove it; for here is the money for the wherry, which I present to Tom;" and I put the money into young Tom's hand. Tom counted it out before his father and mother, much to their astonishment.

"When I say I thank you," said Tom, "you know I mean it. Jacob, it is a great deal of money; and I shall lay by my earnings as fast as I can that you may have it back, in case you want it."

CHAPTER X

I shook hands with Tom, and pulled up the river, revolving in my mind the scenes of the day. Thus I reached my landing-place and was hauling up my boat, when I heard the sound of a horse's hoofs. I looked round and saw the horse stop at the foot of the bridge, and the rider coming down to me. "My lad," he said, "is it too late for you to launch your boat? I will pay you well."

"Where do you wish to go to, sir?"

"About two miles up the river?" I was delighted to find that the person who addressed me was the one who had hired Mr. Turnbull and me, and been captured. But I did not make myself known.

"Well, sir," said I, "I've no objection. Which side?"

"The left," was the reply.

I knew that well enough, of course; and I pulled in silence until he stopped me and said, "Now pull in to that wall, and make no noise." I obeyed, securing the boat at the very spot where the bricks had been displaced. He stood up, and whistled the two bars of the tune as before, waited five minutes, repeated it, and watched the windows of the house; "It is too late; she is gone to rest," he said.

"I thought there was a lady in the case, sir," I observed. "If you wish to communicate with her, I think I could manage it."

"Could you?" said he. "Pray, how?"

"If you will write a letter, sir, I'll try to let it come to her hand."

"How?"

"That, sir, you must leave me to find out, and trust to opportunity; but you must tell me what sort of a person she is, that I may not give it to another person, and also who else are in the house whom I must avoid."

He described the lady to me, and added that, besides the lady, there were in the house her uncle and his servants, who were all spies on her. We returned to Fulham, and he directed me to be at the foot of the bridge the next morning, when he would come with a letter for the lady. Then he put a guinea into my hands, and rode off briskly.

The next morning the servant brought me the letter, and said that he had orders to wait till the evening. I pulled up the river, placed the letter under the loose brick, as agreed upon with the young lady, and then shoved off to the other side of the river, where I had a full view of the garden. In half an hour, the young lady came out accompanied by another female, and paced up and down the gravel walk. After a time she stopped, and looked on the river, while her companion continued her walk. Then taking care that she was unobserved, she moved the brick aside with her foot, saw the letter, snatched it up eagerly, and concealing it in her dress, cast her eyes carlessly on the river. Now I whistled the bar of music; she heard it, and, turning, away, hastened into the house. In about half an hour she returned, and watching her opportunity, stooped down to the brick. A few minutes after, both she and her companion went into the house. I then pulled in under the wall, lifted the brick, took the letter, and hastened back to Fulham. I found the servant waiting, and handed him the letter; and he rode off with it quickly. Then I returned home pleased with the success of my attempt.

The next day I went to Mr. Turnbull, and gave him an account of all that had passed since I last saw him. "I presume, Jacob," he said, "we shall now have the mystery of the tin box cleared up." He was also much pleased with my reconciliation with the Drummonds. "I wish you to go them again, Jacob," he said, "and see his family."

I hesitated, seeing which he added, "Nay, I shall give you an opportunity, and save that precious pride of yours. I owe Mr. Drummond some money, and I shall send the cheque by you." I assented.

I had not yet launched my boat the next morning, when down came the young gentleman of the tin box. "Faithful," said he, come to the tavern with me, I must have some conversation with you." I followed him, and as soon as we were in a room, he said, "First let me pay my debt, for I owe you much;" and he laid five guineas on the table. Then he continued, "I find from Cicilia that you have possession of the tin box of deeds. Now, tell me, who was the gentleman that was with you, and has charge of the box? Can you take me to him now?"

"Yes, sir," said I; "I will pull you up in half an hour. The house is close by."

The young gentleman leaped into my wherry, and we were soon in Mr. Turnbull's parlour.

The following is the story of the box as narrated by the young gentleman:—

"The gentleman who prevented me from bringing away the young lady, is uncle to both of us. We are therefore first cousins. Our family name is Wharncliffe. My father was a Major in the army. He died when I was young, and my mother is still alive. The father and mother of Cicilia are both dead. He went out to India to join his brother, another uncle of ours, who has now been dead three years. Thus, out of the four brothers, there is only one left, with whom Cicilia is living, and whose Christian name is Henry. Soon after the death of Cicilia's father, my uncle, James, returned from India on furlough, and took up his quarters with my uncle Henry. After remaining three years in England, he returned to the East Indies. I had heard James mention to my uncle Henry his intention of making his will, and leaving it with him before sailing; but I was not certain whether it had been done or not. Cicilia was left with my uncle Henry, and as we lived in the same house, our affections ripened into love as we grew up. Four years after, news came home of the death of uncle James in India, and it was stated that no will could be found. My uncle Henry, therefore, succeeded as heir-at-law to the whole property of uncle James, which was of considerable worth. Thus were the expectations of Cicilia and myself disappointed. But this was not the worst of it; my uncle Henry intimated to Cicilia that she should be his heiress, provided she married according to his wishes, and pointed out to her that a fortune such as she might expect would warrant the alliance of the first nobleman in the kingdom. And he told me quite plainly that I should find lodgings elsewhere.

"Maddened at this intimation, I quitted the house; but at the same time, the idea of my uncle James having made a will still pressed on my mind. There was a box of deeds and papers which my uncle invariably left in his room—the very box in your possession. I felt convinced that the will, if not destroyed, was in that box. Had I remained in the house, I would have found some means to open it; but it was no longer possible. I told my suspicions to Cicilia, and desired her to make the attempt. She succeeded and found a document in the box labelled as the will of our uncle James. When she wrote to me about the discovery, I persuaded her to gain possession of the box and place herself under my protection, with the determination that we would marry immediately. Now, sir, I have given you a full and honest account, and you know the rest. Now you may decide how to act."

"If you will leave it to me to decide, I shall do it very quickly," said Mr. Turnbull. "A box has fallen into my hands, and I do not know who is the owner. I shall open it, take a list of the deeds it contains, and advertise them in *The Times* and other newpapers. If your dead uncle's will is in it, it will of course be advertised with others; and after such publicity, your uncle Henry will not venture, I promise, to say a word, but be too glad not to be exposed."

Mr. Turnbull then ordered a locksmith to be summoned, and the tin box was opened. The will was read by young Wharncliffe at the request of Mr. Turnbull. Strange to say, the deceased bequeathed the whole of his property to his nephew and niece, provided they married; if they did not, they were left a sum of £20,000 each, and the remainder of the fortune was to go to the first male child born after the marriage of either niece or nephew. To his brother Henry, only a sum of £10,000 was bequeathed. The will was read and returned to Mr. Turnbull, who shook hands with Mr. Wharncliffe, and congratulated him.

"And now," said Mr. Turnbull, "it appears to me that it may be well to avoid any exposure—the case is too clear. Call upon your uncle—state in whose hands the documents are—tell him that he must submit to your terms, which are, that he proves the will, and permits the marriage to take place immediately. As a lawyer, he knows how severely and disgracefully he might be punished for what he has done; he will only be too happy now to accede to your terms."

Mr. Wharncliffe could not but approve this arrangement, and we separated. Mr. Wharncliffe's uncle bowed to circumstances, and pretended to rejoice at the discovery of the will; so Cicilia and William were married one month hence.

CHAPTER XI

AND now, reader, you must allow nearly two years to pass away before I recommence my narrative. The events of that time I shall sum up briefly. I seldom passed a Sunday without paying a visit to the Domine and benefiting by his teaching and good counsel. Mr. Turnbull was always kind and considerate; but he was gradually declining in health. Of the Drummonds I saw but little; when we did meet, I was kindly received; but I never volunteered a call, and it was usually after a message through Tom, that I went to pay my respects to them. Stapleton, as usual, continued to smoke his pipe and discant upon *human nature.* Mary had grown into a splendid woman, and young Tom was a constant attendant upon her. Old Tom's board was up, and he had met with great success in his new work of mending boats.

With respect to myself, it would be more a narrative of feelings than of action. My life glided on as did my wherry—silently and rapidly. One day was but the fore-runner of another. I again turned to my books during the long summer evenings. Mr. Turnbull's library was at my service, and I profited much. After a time, reading became almost a passion, and I was seldom without a book in my hand. But although I improved my mind, I did not render myself happier.

Thus two years passed. One day, as I was sitting in my wherry at the landing place, with a book in my hand, Tom pulled up his boat alongside of mine, and said: "Jacob, do you recollect that my time is up to-morrow? I shall have run off my seven years, and when the sun rises, I shall be free of the river. How much more have you to serve?"

"About fifteen months, as near as I can recollect, Tom," said I.

"I say, you watermen, have you a mind for a good fare?" cried a dark-looking, short, young man, standing on the top of the flight of steps.

"Where to, sir?"

"Gravesend, my jokers, if you aren't afraid of salt water."

"Are you in a great hurry, sir?" said Tom.

"Yes, in a devil of a hurry; I shall lose my ship, I fear. What will you take me there for?"

"Two guineas, sir."

"Very well," was the ready reply.

Tom came over to my wherry, and we started down the river with the tide. Our fare informed us that he was the master's mate of the *Immortalite*, forty-gun frigate, lying off Gravesend. The tide served us, and we were close to the frigate in a comparatively short time. Just then the ship's launch bringing fresh water came alongside, and I know not whether from accident, or wilfully, although I suspect the latter, the midshipmen who steered her shot her against the wherry, which was crushed in. Tom and I were left in danger of being jammed to death between the launch and the side of the frigate; but we were hauled into the ship quickly, while our wherry drifted away heavily. We went to one of the officers and asked him to send a boat to pick up our wherry.

"Speak to the first lieutenant—there he is," was the reply.

We went up to the person pointed out to us, and stated our request. He looked at us earnestly, and walked aft to see if our wherry was yet in sight. At that moment, up came our fare, the master's mate, to report himself to the first lieutenant.

"Come on board, sir," said the mate.

"You have broken your leave, sir," replied the first lieutenant, "and now I have to send a boat to pick up that wherry."

"If you please, sir, they are two very fine young men," observed the mate. "They'd make capital foretopmen."

This hint, given by the mate to gain the officer's favour, was not lost upon him.

"Who are you, my lads," said he, looking at us.

"Watermen, sir,"

"Was that your own boat?"

"No, sir, it belongs to the man whom I serve with."

"Oh! not your boat? Are you apprentices?"

"Yes, sir, both of us are apprentices."

"Show me your indentures."

"We don't carry them about with us, sir."

"Then, how am I to know that you are apprentices?"

"We can prove it, sir, if you wish it."

"I do wish it."

"Will you please to send for our wherry, sir?"

"No, my lads, I can't find king's boats for such service. Suppose you volunteer?"

"Will you allow us to go on shore for half an hour to think about it?" said I.

"No, I am afraid that people might dissuade you. But I will give you time till to-morrow morning." So saying, the first lieutenant left us to ourselves and went away.

"Well, Jacob, we are in for it," said Tom. "Depend upon it, there's no escaping now."

"We managed to obtain some sheets of paper, and I wrote to Mr. Drummond and Mr. Turnbull, as well as to Mary and old Tom, requesting the two latter to forward our clothes to Deal, whither the ship was moving to await orders. Tom also wrote to comfort his mother, solemnly promising to keep sober. Having contrived to get these letters duly posted, we had nothing better to do than to look out for some thing to sleep on. Meanwhile we were walking under the half-deck; but not a soul spoke to or even took the least notice of us. A spare top-sail, which had been stowed between two guns, was the best accommodation that offered itself. We took possession of it, and, being tired alike in mind and body, were soon fast asleep.

At daylight the next morning, Tom and I stood in the gangway, carelessly watching the proceedings. The ship was fairly under sail, and the order was given by the first lieutenant coil down the ropes.

"I think, Jacob, we may as well help," said Tom, catching hold of the main rope, and hauling it forward.

"With all my heart," said I, and I hauled it forward, while he coiled it away.

While we were thus employed, the first lieutenant walked forward, and recognised us. "That's what I like, my lads," he said, "you don't sulk, I see, and I shan't forget it."

"I hope you won't forget that we are apprentices, sir, and will allow us to go back to our work," said I.

"I have a shocking bad memory in some things," was his reply as he passed forward. He did not, however, forget to arrange for our meals that day, and insert our names in pencil upon the ship's books.

We anchored in the Downs on the following morning. Shortly afterwards, our clothes were delivered to us. I received letters from both Mr. Drummond and Mr. Turnbull, telling me that they would immediately apply to the Admiralty for our release.

I need hardly say that, for the first three or four days, we were not very comfortable. We had been put into a mess and stationed in the foretops. The ship was soon clear of the Channel, and had orders to cruise for two months between the Western Isles and Madeira, in quest of some privateers, and, thereafter, to join the admiral at Halifax. In a week we were on our station, and the weather was fine for some days.

Tom and I were as active and forward as we could be; and Mr. Knight, the first lieutenant, spoke well of us to the Captain; as a result of it, we were made *second* captains, larboard and starboard, of the foretop. This was a great promotion for fresh, young hands like us, especially as we had not been bred as regular sailors. Tom was a great favourite among the men, always joking, and ready for any lark or nonsense. Moreover, he used to mimic the Captain, which few others dared to do; for instance, after the manner of the Captain, Tom would often speak of what he *liked*, laying a peculiar emphasis on the last word. One day we were both fairly caught at it by the Captain himself. It happened thus:

One of the marines fell overboard. "Man overboard," was cried out immediately, and the men were busy clearing away a boat with expedition for the rescue of the fallen man. The Captain had been standing on the signal chest at the time of the accident, and had therefore seen it himself.

The poor fellow could not swim, and Tom, turning to me, said, "Jacob, I should *like* to save that jolly," and immediately dashed overboard.

"And I should *like* to help you, Tom," cried I, and followed him.

The Captain was close to us, which we had not noticed, and he heard us both, and saw our action. Between us, we easily held up the marine, and the boat had us all on board quick enough. When we came up the side, the Captain was at the gangway. He showed his teeth, and shook at us the telescope in his hand, saying, "I heard you both; and I should *like* to have a good many more impudent fellows like you."

We continued our cruise, looking out sharp for the privateers, but without success, though seven weeks had passed. So the Captain promised five guineas to the man who should first sight a privateer and report. So every one on board was alert and keen in scanning the horizon as long as he could.

During this period of idle waiting, the ship's hands were kept in proper discipline and exercise. The evenings were generally devoted to the latter, and one exercise was in particular greatly liked by the Captain, because it made the men smart. It was called, "Follow the leader." One of the men led, and all that chose, followed him. Sometimes forty or fifty would join. Whatever the leader did, the rest must do also; wherever he went, they must follow. Tom was one day the leader. He ran up and down, hither and thither, and round and round, and blacked his face in the funnel, in all of which he was followed by about thirty others, hallooing and laughing, while the officers and others were looking on and admiring their agility. Suddenly a novel idea came into Tom's head. It was then seven o'clock in the evening, and the ship was lying becalmed. Tom again sprang up the rigging, followed by me and the rest, and crying out, "Follow the leader," leaped into the sea. I followed him, and the others did the same.

The Captain chanced to pass by as Tom tumbled overboard, and was struck with astonishment to see twenty or thirty more following him, as if possessed with madness. Some of the men, who could not swim, but were too proud to refuse to follow, were nearly drowned. The first lieutenant had, therefore, to lower a boat to pick them up.

"Confound that fellow," said the Captain, "he is always at the head of all mischief. "Follow the leader," indeed!—Beazley, come up, here." Tom went up to him meekly, and he said, "Look ye, my lad, a joke is a joke; but everybody can't swim as well as you. I can't afford to lose any of my men by your pranks; so don't try that again, boy. I don't *like* it."

Everyone thought that Tom got off cheaply. "Beg pardon, sir," said Tom, however, with apparent humility, "but they were all so dirty—they had blacked themselves at the funnel, and I thought a little washing would not do them any harm."

"Be off, sir, and remember what I have said," said the Captain, and turned away, trying hard to suppress his laughter.

I heard the first lientenant say to the Captain, "He is worth any ten men in the ship, sir. He keeps them all alive and merry, and sets such a good example."

Some time after, Tom had gone up the yard, and was looking out for privateers. Presently he cried out, "Sail."

"Where? Do you make her out?"

"Yes, sir, I think she is a schooner."

"That's one of them, depend on it," said the Captain gladly. Who is the man that reported it?"

"Tom Beazely, sir," said the first lieutenant.

"Confound the fellow; he makes all my ship's company jump overboard, and now I must give him five guineas."

At broad daylight, the schooner was distinctly made out. The calm still continuing, the launch and the cutters were lowered, manned and armed. Tom and I were stationed in the first and second cutters. We were ordered to take a hasty dinner, after which the boats were ordered to shove off. In less than half an hour we were within gunshot, and the privateer commenced firing gunshot at us. One of her shot passed through the second cutter, in which I was stationed, wounding me and two others. The boat immediately turned over with us. We rose to the surface and clung to the side of the boat till the first cutter came to our assistance. I had received a splinter in my left arm, and could not hold on till the cutter came; I lost my recollection and sank. Tom saw me go down, dived after me, and brought me up to the surface, and we were both hauled in. The others were also saved. They bound my wounded arm, and laid me at the bottom of the boat. I recovered my senses shortly after, and found that our ship had just approached the scene of conflict.

I was taken on to the ship, and the surgeon examined my arm, and dressed the wound. I was then put into my hammock, and was in great pain. Thus passed two days, and all the time I chafed in my bed or lay unconscious. On the third morning, Tom came to me as usual, and asked how I was. I told him I was better, and in less pain. Then I asked him about the privateer, and wished to know if she had been captured.

"Yes," replied Tom, "she surrendered after a hard struggle; and we have taken possession of her.

Soon after, we shaped our course for Halifax, with the privateer in company, and arrived there in five weeks. My wound was now nearly healed, but I was yet too weak to return to duty. So I volunteered to assist the ship's clerk in his work. As long as I remained in the clerk's office, I was kindly treated, and had no reason to complain of a man-of-war. Thus passed four months, during which we were cruising in Boston Bay, when we received orders to return to Halifax to join the admiral. We had now been absent a year from England without receiving any letters. But as soon as we anchored at Halifax again, the admiral's boat brought several bags of letters for our officers and men, and I waited with impatience for the sorting and distribution.

"Faithful," said a marine, "here are two letters for you."

I took them, and hastened into the clerk's office to read them without interruption. The first was addressed in a formal hand quite unknown to me, and I opened it with some wonder. It was from a lawyer, and its contents were such as I never had been prepared to expect.

"Sir,—We hasten to advise you of the death of your good friend, Mr. Alexander Turnbull. By his will, of which you are the executor, he has made you his sole heir, bequeathing you, at the present, the sum of £30,000, and the remainder of his fortune, at the death of his wife. This jointure, yielding £1080 per annum upon 3 per cent consols, will amount to £27,360. I beg to congratulate you upon your good fortune. By the same mail that conveys this letter are forwarded an order from the Admiralty for your discharge and a passage home.

"I am, Sir,
"Yours very respectfully,
"John Fletcher"

I was so stunned by this most surprising news, that I stood likd a statue, with the letter in my hand, when the first lieutenant, passing by, noticed me, and said with concern, "Faithful, why, what's the matter? Are you ill?" I could not reply, but put the letter into his hand. After reading it through with exclamations, he said, "I wish you joy, my lad, and may it be my turn next time. Well, I suppose we shall get no more work out of you—".

"The Captain wants you, Mr. Knight," said one of the midshipmen, touching his hat.

The first lieutenant went to the Captain, and in a few minutes returned, holding some papers in his hand.

"It's all right, Faithful; here is your discharge, and an order for your passage home."

He laid them on the table and went away. The next person who came was Tom, holding in his hand a letter from Mary, with a postscript from his mother.

"Well, Jacob," said he, "I have news to tell you. Mary says that Mr. Turnbull is dead, and has left her father £ 200, and that she has been told that he has left you something handsome."

"He has, indeed, Tom," said I; "read this letter."

While Tom was reading it, I opened the other letter, which was from Mr. Drummond. It communicated the same intelligence, and recommended my immediate return. A bill was enclosed for £ 100 to enable me to appear in a manner suited to my present condition.

"Well," said Tom, "this is, indeed, good news, Jacob. You are a gentleman at last, as you deserve to be. It has made me so happy: what do you mean to do?"

"I have my discharge here," said I, "and an order for a passage home."

"Better still. I am happy; so happy, Jacob; but what is to become of me?" said Tom, brushing away a tear.

"You shall soon follow me, Tom, if I can manage it by money or influence."

"*I* will manage it, if you don't, Jacob. I won't stay here without you."

"Do nothing rashly, Tom. I am sure I can buy your discharge, and on my arival in England, I will not think of anything else until it is done."

"You must be quick, then, Jacob; for I'm sure I can't stay here long."

"Trust to me, Tom; you will still find me Jacob Faithful," said I, extending my hand. The news had spread through the ship, and many of the officers, as well as the men, came to congratulate me. I was summoned by the Captain, and I went to his cabin.

"Jacob Faithful, you are aware there is an order for your discharge," said he kindly, "you will be discharged this afternoon into the *Astrea*; she is ordered home, and will sail in a few days. You have conducted yourself well since you have been under my command; and although you are now in a situation not to require a good certificate, still you will have the satisfaction of feeling that you have done your duty in the station of life to which you have, for a period, been called—I wish you well!" I thanked the captain for his kind words.

I then went ashore, obtained the money for my bill, hastened to a tailor, and procured all that was requisite for the outward appearance of a gentleman. I then returned to the *Immortalite*, and bade farewell to the officers and seamen with whom I had been most intimate. My parting with Tom was painful.

"Jacob," he said, "don't think I envy you; on the contrary, I am as grateful as if such good fortune had fallen to my own lot; but, I cannot help fretting at the thought of being left here without you unless you are quick."

I renewed my promises to procure his discharge speedily, and forcing upon him all the money I could spare, I left him, with as heavy a heart as his own.

Our passage home was rapid, and in three weeks, we dropped our anchor at Spitfield.

CHAPTER XII

MY first object, on my return, was to call upon old Tom, and assure him of his son's welfare, which I did the very next morning. Then, promising to return soon, I left them, and rowed straight to Stapleton's. He was, as usual, smoking in front of the public house, and expressed genuine gladness on my safe return. Inquiring after Mary, I took his leave and went up to Brentford to see the Domine. That worthy gentleman was in the schoolroom, seated at his elevated desk. I had to call his name twice before I could draw his attention to me. Then he looked up, and offering me a most hearty welcome in his own characteristic way, gave the boys a holiday, and led me into the house. I narrated to him all that had taken place during my service on the frigate. Then he congratulated me on my accession to fortune, adding that, in the great joy he felt at my return, he had forgotten to do so earlier.

"I was at Mr. Turnbull's death-bed, Jacob," said he; and I verily believe he was a good man, and will meet the reward of one. With his last breath, he bade me give his love and blessing to you. It will pain you to hear that affliction at your absence hastened his end."

I was too deeply affected by the Domine's words to speak; and I remained silent for a few moments. Then, in reply to the Domine's question, I said that I had not yet seen the Drummonds, but would do so the next morning. Soon after, I wished to take his leave, for it was late, and I had to go back a long way, to my lodgings in London.

"Thou needs't not. Jacob," said the Domine. "Thine own house is at hand."

"My own house!" said I in wonder.

"Yes; by the will of Mr. Turnbull, his house and furniture belong to you, not to his wife."

"Indeed!—then, where is Mrs. Turnbull?"

"At Bath, where she has taken up her residence. The house is all ready for your reception. You may take possession this evening."

I then left the Domine, and walked to the house left me by my late friend and benefactor.

On my arrival, the front gates were opened by the gardener, who made me a profound courtesy. Everything was neat, and in good order. As soon as possible, I rid myself of his attentions, for I wished to be alone. Powerful feelings crowded on my mind. I went to Mr. Turnbull's study, and sat down in his chair. The proud feeling of possession softened into gratitude to Heaven; and combined with sorrow at his death, it made me remain for a long while in deep thought. "And all this, and more, much more, are mine," I mused, "the sailor before the mast, the waterman on the river, the charity-boy, the orphan, sits down in quiet possession of luxury and wealth! What have 1 done to deserve all this?" My heart told me, 'Nothing'; and I poured forth my soul in thanks to Heaven. I felt more composed when I had performed this most pleasing and sacred duty.

Early the next morning after finishing my breakfast, I dressed and went to Mr. Drummond's house. Sarah was sitting alone at her drawing, and started from her chair as my name was announced. We joined hands in silence, and neither appeared willing to break it. At last, I faltered out, "Miss. Drummond!" —but I could not proceed further.

"Mr. Faithful," said she, and then, after a break—"How silly this is! I ought to have congratulated you on your safe return, and your good fortune; and, indeed, *Mr.* Faithful, no one can do so more sincerely."

"Miss Drummond," said I, confused, "when I was an orphan, a charity-boy, a waterman, you called me Jacob; if the alteration in my fortune induces you to address me in so formal a manner, I can only say that I wish I were again Jacob Faithful the waterman."

"Nay," replied she, "it was your own choice to be a waterman. You might at this time have been a partner with my father; for he said so but last night, when we were talking about you."

Mr. Drummond came into the room and extending his hand, said, "My dear Jacob, I am delighted to see you back again, and to congratulate you on your good fortune. But you have business to transact which will not admit of any delay. You most prove the will, and arrange with the lawyers as soon as possible. Will you come now? All the papers are below, and I have the whole morning to spare—We will be back to dinner, Sarah, if Jacob has no other engagement."

"I have none," replied I, "and shall be most happy to avail myself of your kindness."

It was late when we returned, and Mrs. Drummond received me with her usual kindness. I narrated, during the evening, my adventures since we parted. The evening passed away so rapidly that it was midnight before I took my leave, and left for my lodgings. The next morning I removed to the house left me by Mr. Turnbull, and the first order I gave was for a wherry; and half my time was spent upon the river, pulling every day down to Mr. Drummond's, and returning in the evening, or late at night. Thus passed away two months, during which I occasionally saw the Domine, Stapleton and old Tom Beazely. I had exerted myself to procure Tom's discharge, and, at last, had the pleasure of telling the old people that it was to go out by the next packet.

Two days after this, as I was sitting at breakfast, what was my surprise at the appearance of young Tom, who entered the room laughing, as he held out his hand!

"Tom," I exclaimed, "Why, how did you come here?"

"By water, Jacob, as you may suppose."

"But you could not have received your discharge. Is the ship come home?"

"I hope not. The fact is, I discharged myself."

"What! Did you desert?"

"Even so, but I could not help it."

"Nevertheless, Tom, I am sorry that you deserted. It may bring trouble."

"Never fear: the people on the river know that I have my discharge, and I'm safe enough."

"But now you want money to buy your boat. You must accept it from me, Tom; and when you marry, you must accept more."

"With all my heart, Jacob. I can never repay you for all that you have done for me; and so I may just as well increase the debt."

"That's good logic, Tom." Tom finished his breakfast, and then took his leave.

Some days passed without any intelligence of Tom, and I went to old Tom to inquire. I found the old couple in evident distress, and in reply to my inquiry, the old woman burst out into sobs, crying, "Oh! deary me, that wicked, good-for-nothing girl!"

"Good Heavens! What is the matter," inquired I of old Tom.

"The matter, Jacob, is that Tom has enlisted as a soldier, and the regiment is ordered to the West Indies, where the yellow fever carries off men in hundreds."

"Tell me how it happened," I said, and Tom replied, "The long and short of it is simply this, Jacob: That girl, Mary Stapleton, has been the ruin of my boy. At first, after he came home, he was well received; but it did not last long. In sheer light-heartedness, she plays him off against the sergeant of a recruiting party, and flies off from one to the other. Tom gets out of patience, and gives himself up to drink at the public house, in order to forget his misery. The sergeant comes up, bitterly complains of having been equally ill-treated by Mary, pretends to be angry with her, and plies Tom with wine, until the boy is nearly unconscious. Then the sergeant gets through the necessary formalities, and coaxes Tom to enlist."

"Can't you belp us, Jacob," cried the old woman, and the tears flowed fast from her eyes.

"If money can procure his discharge, it shall be obtained," said I, and comforting her and old Tom as well as I could, I left them.

CHAPTER XIII

MEETING Mr. Wharncliffe soon after, I mentioned Tom's unfortunate condition to him. He felt very sorry for him and his old parents, and promised to help me in my endeavour to obtain his discharge, having some influence with the authorities. But our efforts at the Horse Guards proved useless, as the ship had sailed to the West Indies already. We returned in sore disappointment, and on the way, I dropped down at the Drummonds, and went to see Sarah. I told her of all that had happened to Tom, and when I mentioned Mary's part in it, Sarah could not excuse such light-heartedness in a young woman. "She must have been blind, indeed," "said Sarah, not to have noticed that she was driving Tom to despair, by trifling too much with his feelings."

"Sarah," said, and then I stopped.

"Well?"

"I was—" I said, stammering a little, "I was going to ask you if you were blind."

"As to what, Jacob?"

"As to my feelings towards you."

"No; I believe you like me very well."

"Do you think that that is all?"

"Where do you dine to-day, Jacob."

"That must depend upon you and your answer. If I dine here to-day, I trust to dine here often. If not, probably I never may at all again. I wish to know, Sarah, whether you have been blind to my feelings towards you."

"If I have been blind to your feelings, I have not been blind to your merit, Jacob. Perhaps I have not been blind to pour feelings, too."

"I can hardly believe that I can to be so happy, Sarah. Be more explicit, I beg you, and put me out of my suspense."

"What do you wish me to say?"

"That you will not reject the orphan who was fostered by your father, and who now reminds you of what he was, because he wishes you not to forget, at this moment, the greatest bar to his presumption—his humble origin."

"Jacob, that was said like yourself—it was nobly said; and if you were not born noble, you have true nobility of mind. Have I not often, during our long friendship, told you that I love you?"

"Yes, as a child you did love me, Sarah."

"Then, as a woman, I repeat it. And now, are you satisfied?"

I took Sarah by the hand, and she did not withdraw it. Before the day was over, Mrs. Drummond had been spoken to, and at dinner Mr. Drummond shook me by the hand warmly, and said, "You have made us all very happy, Jacob; for that girl seems determined to marry you or none at all."

The next morning, I was seated at breakfast in my own house, musing over all my happiness, and contrasting it bitterly with the misery of the Toms, when young Tom nearly took my breath away by turning in, with barely a shirt on, and covered with dust.

"Good Heavens, Tom! Have you deserted again?"

"Yes, replied Tom, sinking in a chair with fatigue and excitement. "I am done up, Jacob; let me have something to drink."

I brought him some wine, and when he had drunk it, I asked him anxiously whether he knew the cousequences of his desertion.

"Yes," said Tom, "but I could not help it. Mary wrote to me that she would do all I wished, and go with me to the end of the world; she made all the amends she could, poor girl! and I could not leave her. I know the risk I run; but, perhaps, if you obtain my discharge, they may let me off."

That, indeed, was the only thing to do, and telling Tom not to leave the house, I went to Mr. Wharncliff to consult with him. When I returned home late in the evening, the gardener told me that Tom had gone out, and had not returned. I went to bed with the most anxious feelings; and the next morning, Stapleton brought me the bitter news that Tom had been to see Mary, and was arrested by soldiers and taken in custody to the Maidstone depot.

"This is a bad business, Stapleton," said I "Tom will be tried for desertion, and God knows how it will end!" Sending Stapleton away with some money, I hastened at once to Mr. Wharncliffe, and told him of Tom's arrest.

"This is, indeed, an awkward business," he said, and will require more interest, I fear, than I can command. Lose no time, Jacob, but go at once to Maidstone, and see the Colonel. I will go to the Horse Guards, and see what is to be done.

I wrote at once a hurried note to Sarah to account for my absence, ordered for post horses, and, early in the afternoon, arrived at Maidstone. Immediately I sought the officer commanding the depot, and stated to him the reason of my calling upon him.

"It will rest altogether with the Horse Guards, Mr. Faithful, and I am afraid I can give you but little hope. All I can promise you is to allow the prisoner every comfort which his situation will permit."

"I thank you sir," said I, "will you allow me and his people to see him?"

"Most certainly; the order shall be given forthwith."

I thanked the officer for his kindness and took my leave.

CHAPTER XIV

I HASTENED to the dark cellar where Tom was confined, and was permitted by the guard to go in. Tom was sitting on a bench, whistling a slow tune.

"This is kind, Jacob, but no more than I expected of you. How's poor Mary?"

"But, Tom, are you aware of your danger?"

"Yes, Jacob, perfectly; I shall be tried by a court-martial and shot. I have made up my mind to it—at all events, it is better than being hung like a dog. I shall die like a gentleman. Nay, I shall go out of the world with as much noise as if a battle had been fought, or a great man had died."

"How do you mean?"

"Why, there will be more than one *bullet-in.*"

"This is no time for jesting, Tom."

"Not for you, Jacob, as a sincere friend, I grant; not for poor Mary, as a devoted girl; not for my poor father and mother—no, no," said Tom; "I do feel for them; but, for myself, I neither fear nor care. I have not done any wrong. I was pressed against the law, and I deserted. I was enlisted when I was drunk and mad, and I deserted. There is no disgrace to me; the disgrace is to the government, which allows such acts. If I am to be a victim, well and good—we can die but once."

"Very true, Tom; but you are too young to die; and we must hope for the best."

"I have given up all hope, Jacob. I know the law will be put in force. I shall die and go to another and a better world, as the parson says."

Tom wrung me by the hand, and turned away to hide his distress. I nodded my head in assent, for I could not speak for emotion, and left him.

Mr. Wharncliffe's endeavours at the Horse Guards were unsuccessful. The court-martial was held, and Tom was condemned to death. I received a letter from Tom, requesting that all of us would come down and bid him farewell. I hired a carriage for old Tom, his wife, and Stapleton and Mary, and the Domine came with me in my own chariot. We set off early on a Sunday morning, and arrived at Maidstone about eleven o'clock. We put up at an inn close to the barracks, and it was arranged that the Domine and I should see Tom first, then his father and mother, and lastly Mary.

Tom extended his hand towards me with a faint smile as we entered, and said, "It is all over now, Jacob; there is no hope. I have made up my mind to die. But I wish these last farewells were over: for they unman me. I hope you are well, sir," he added, addressing the Domine.

"Nay, my poor boy, I am as well as age and infirmity will permit; but why should I complain, when I see youth, health and strength about to be sacrificed, and so many made miserable ? "

" Will you see your father and mother first, Tom ; they are all here," said I.

" Yes," said Tom, in a faltering tone.

I went out and returned with the old woman on my arms ; and old Tom stumped after me with the help of a stick. Poor old Mrs. Beazley fell on her son's neck, and sobbed convulsively.

" My boy—my boy—my dear, dear boy ! " she cried in anguish. " My God ! he'll be dead to-morrow." Her head sank on his shoulder, and her sobs were choking her. Tom kissed his mother's forehead, and I placed her down gently on the floor. Old Tom remained a silent, but agitated, spectator of the scene. The muscles on his face twitched convulsively, and the tears at last forced themselves out from his eyes. Tom took his father by the hand, and they sat down together.

" You are not angry with with me, father, for deserting."

" No, my boy, no; but I do think I have reason to be angry elsewhere, when I reflect that, after having lost my two legs in defend-ing my country, I now find her taking away from me my only boy in his prime."

"We shall meet again, father."

"Hope so, Tom, in Heaven."

"And now, father, bless me, and take care of mother."

"Bless you, Tom, bless you," cried the old man, in a suffocating voice, and tottered and and fell into his son's arms, and we lowered him gently down by his wife.

"Jacob," said Tom, "let now the last scene be got over—let me see Mary."

Mary was led in by her father. I feared that she would swoon away; but, though pale and gasping, she walked up firmly to Tom, and sat down by him on the bench. Then looking anxiously round upon the group, she said, "I know that all I now say is useless, Tom; but still I must say it—it is I who, by my folly, have occasioned all this .misery—it is I who have caused you to suffer—a dreadful death—yes, Tom, I am your murderer."

"Not so, Mary, the folly was my own," replied Tom, taking her hand.

"You cannot disguise facts, dearest Tom," said Mary, "my eyes have been opened, too late, it is true; but they *have* been opened, and I feel the horrid conviction of my guilt. See what misery I have brought about! There is a father, who has sacrified his youth and his limbs to his country, sobbing in the arms of a mother, whose life is bound up with that of her only son. To them," continued Mary, falling down on her knees, "to them I must kneel for pardon; and I ask it in the name of God whose forgiveness every one must seek."

A pause—then said old Tom, "I forgive her, poor thing, yes; who could refuse it, as she kneels there;" then, addressing his wife, he said, "come, look up, dame; you must forgive her; think that our poor boy may be asking the same of Heaven to-morrow."

The old woman looked up, and her dimmed eyes caught a sight of Mary's imploring and beautiful attitude; it could not be withstood.

"As I hope for mercy to my poor boy, unhappy young woman, so do I forgive you."

"May God reward you, when you are summoned before Him!"

"And now," said Mary turning round on her knees to Tom, "to you, Tom, must be my last appeal. I know *you* will forgive me. But hear me, Tom; and, all of you, hear me. I never loved but you, and, alas, by my folly, you alone have I sacrificed. Now I declare, as if I stood before God, that you shall have my eternal and unceasing love. To your memory I am hereafter wedded; to join you will be my only wish—and if Heaven would grant me a boon, it would be that I should die with you, Tom, in those dear arms."

Mary held out her arms to Tom, who, falling down on his knees, embraced her, and thus they remained with their faces buried in each other's shoulders. The Domine knelt down, and repeated the Lord's prayer; all followed his example: and there was a pause.

CHAPTER XV

AN hour later, having sent back home old Tom and his wife, Stapleton and Mary, and the Domine, I returned to Tom's cellar.

"Are they all gone?" whispered Tom to me.

"All, Tom," said I.

"Then the bitterness of death is passed; God have mercy on them, and heal their afflicted souls."

A passionate flood of tears, which lasted for some minutes, relieved the poor fellow; and he dried his eyes, and became more composed.

"Jacob, I hardly need tell you my dying request; watch over my poor father and mother—comfort poor Mary. God bless you, Jacob. You have indeed been a true and generous friend, and may God reward you! And, now, Jacob, leave me; I must commune with my God, and pray for forgiveness. The space between me and eternity is but short."

Tom threw himself into my arms, where he remained for some minutes; he then broke gently away, and pointed to the door. I once more took his hand, and we parted.

I went back to the inn, in a state of feverish agitation. And, there, the day's newspaper caught my eye. I took it up, and read it over mechanically. A paragraph held my attention. "His Majesty's ship, *Immortalite*, Chatham, to be paid off." Then our ship had come home. Something whispered to me to go and see Captain Maclean, and try if anything could yet be done for Tom, although it was then too late by all accounts. So I ordered horses at once, and went to Chatham, and was soon in the presence of the Captain, telling him all, and begging his intercession.

"Faithful," replied he, "it appears that Tom Beazely has deserted twice; still there is much extenuation from what you say; at all events, the punishment of death is too severe, and I do not *like* it—I can save him, and I will. By the rule of the services, a deserter from one service can be claimed from the other, and must be punished by officers of the first alone. His sentence is, therefore, not legal."

In a few minutes, a party of marines under the second lieutenant was despatched with me on shore, with a letter from the Captain to the Commanding Officer of the depot. That night we presented the Captain's letter to him.

"Good Heavens! how fortunate! you can establish his identity, I presume."

"Yes, all of us here can swear to him."

"'Tis sufficient, Mr. Faithful. The rules of the service must be obeyed, and you will sign a receipt for the prisoner."

This was done, and Tom was with us in a little while after. We returned at once, and soon arrived at Chatham, and Tom was given into the charge of the master-at-arms on the frigate as a deserter.

Three days after, the court-martial was held; it was very short; the desertion was proved, and Tom was called to his defence. He produced his papers and proved that he was impressed before his apprenticeship expired. Tom was acquitted on the ground of illegal detention, and he was *free.* I returned my thanks to Captain Maclean and the officers, and leaving the ship with Tom, I arrived at my own house late in the night.

The next morning, I went with Tom to his old parents, and leaving him in the boat, I went in advance to prepare them for the happy news. The old couple were sitting by the fire in silence, and the house appeared gloomy and forlorn. I wished them both a good morning, and the old woman burst into tears, while old Tom bade me sit down by him and talk to him of his boy; "For we can bear to talk of him *now*, Jacob," he said.

"Yes, now that he is in heaven. Poor fellow," added the old woman.

I gently broke the news to them, but they would hardly believe it at first. Tom himself, however, ran up at my call, and was locked up in his mother's arms. I waited outside for an hour, and then went in and said, "You must now part with Tom a little while; there are others to be made happy, aren't there?"

"Very true," said Tom, "go, my lad and comfort the poor girl."

"Go, Tom; go, and tell her that I don't care how soon she's my daughter."

We plied our boat again, and were soon at Stapleton's house. It was no easy task to break the news to her. All my care and prodence were of little avail; for when at last I said to her that Tom was pardoned, and alive, she swooned away; but Tom was hard by, watching the pathetic scene unobserved, and was in time to catch her from falling. So I left them together.

And now there is little more to tell. That very evening the day was fixed for my marriage with Sarah; and she and I, and Mary and Tom, were united on the same day, and there was nothing to cloud our happiness.

Reader, farewell!

The Huxley Press, Madras